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FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.

IN THE COPPER FIELDS OR THE MINE THAT MADE THE MONEY AND OTHER STORIES

By A Self-Made Man



"Stop!" thundered Prawle, yanking out his gun so swiftly as to almost take the boys' breath away.
"Throw up your right hands and move on, or I'll drill you both quicker'n greased lightning." And he meant it, too, they noticed.

Fame and Fortune Weekly

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

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IN THE COPPER FIELDS

— OR —

THE MINE THAT MADE THE MONEY

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.

BACK TO LIFE.

"He's the most lifelike corpse I ever saw in my life, and I've seen several in my time," said Jack Howard, a stalwart, bronze-featured boy of seventeen. He looked down at the body stretched out on a slate slab in the center of the little surgery at the rear of Dr. Phineas Fox's drugstore in the town of Sackville, Neb.

"He certainly does look natural—not at all like the usual run of subjects that find their way in here occasionally," admitted his friend and chum, Charlie Fox, the doctor's son, holding the kerosene lamp he carried in his hand well up, so as to bring the dead man into full relief.

"What would you imagine he died of?"

"Want of breath," snickered Charlie, raising one of the corpse's arms and then letting it fall back on the slab with a flop.

"Funny boy," grinned Jack.

"Well, he dropped dead up at Mugging's farm, where he stopped this morning and asked for something to eat. Of course he was sent here for father to hold a post-mortem on to determine the cause of death."

Charlie's father was the leading physician in Sackville.

He also officiated as coroner in all cases of sudden death occurring in the county.

At the present time he was absent on a similar kind of a case at a village some distance away, and was not expected back until late that night.

The doctor and his family lived in a neat little cottage, divided from his drugstore by the garden, and he was generally considered well-to-do.

Sackville was a town of some three or four thousand inhabitants, with outlying farms and farmhouses.

It was the county seat, and, being the largest place in the county, country people for miles around traded at its stores.

A good-sized river skirted its northern boundary, and the traffic in that direction made Sackville quite a lively place, and consequently of some local importance.

Jack Howard was a lad of good family whose people lived in New York.

A close student, too intense application to his studies had undermined his general health, and the family physician recommended that he be sent out West to rough it a while on the large farm of a distant relative in Nebraska.

This farm was about three miles outside of Sackville.

Jack had already lived and worked like an ordinary farm-hand on his relative's place for the best part of a year, and his new life had made an altogether different looking boy of him—so much so, indeed, that his parents and friends in the

East could hardly recognize the photograph of himself which he had lately sent them.

He often came to Sackville; and, being a genial, whole-souled kind of a boy, had made himself popular with all with whom he came in contact.

This was particularly the case with Charlie Fox, who instantly took an uncommon fancy to him, and the consequence was that they became chums.

Charlie had just graduated at the Sackville high school.

He had taken up the study of medicine under his father a year or so before, as the old gentleman intended his son should be his successor, and Charlie rather liked the profession.

His father proposed to send him to a medical school at Omaha soon, where he would get hospital practise.

Jack had come in to visit Charlie that afternoon and, as a matter of course, he stayed to supper.

Mrs. Fox and her daughter Flora had received him with their usual hospitality, and after the meal the ladies and the two boys had put in a very pleasant evening.

About the time Howard was thinking of mounting his horse to ride back to the farm a fierce thunder and lightning storm had swooped down on the town, and so Jack was easily persuaded to postpone his departure until morning, to Charlie's great satisfaction, for he never tired of the society of his friend.

As soon as Charlie's sister and mother went upstairs for the night the budding medicus proposed to his chum that they visit the surgery and inspect the corpse.

This gruesome suggestion meeting Jack's approbation, they put on their hats and made a dash across the garden through the rain.

Charlie lit the surgery lamp and then turned down the sheet which had hidden the body from view.

It was then that Jack made the remark with which this chapter opens.

"Does your mother and sister know that this body is here?" asked Jack.

"No," replied Charlie, shaking his head.

"Would it bother them any?"

"Well, they're rather delicate about having dead ones so close at hand. Pop always keeps these things a secret; they never have the least idea there's going to be an inquest till the jurors come—and not always then."

"Put the lamp on that bracket, Charlie."

"You don't mind staying in here a while, then?" said his friend, in a tone of satisfaction, as he placed the lamp on its rest, where the rays diffused a soft light around the little room and upon the various bottles and packages with their strange and peculiarly smelling contents.

"Not in the least," answered Jack, heartily, pulling out a

small brier-root pipe and a package of short-cut and preparing to have a smoke.

"Glad to hear it. Some fellows would have the creeps at the idea of staying in this place with a corpse."

"It doesn't worry me in the least," said Jack. "As for you, I suppose you are used to such things."

"I see 'em occasionally, but not often enough to suit me," replied Charlie, with professional enthusiasm. "In the last three months, however, I helped Mold, the undertaker, to lay out half a dozen of his cases, just to get used to handling dead bodies. I don't want to be at all squeamish when I come to cut up parts of subjects on the dissecting table at Omaha. The old-timers there always have the joke on the newcomers, and as my father is a surgeon, I don't want to disgrace the family, you know."

"That's right. Gee, what a crash!"

Jack walked over to the window, drew the curtain aside, and glanced out into the storm, which was now getting in its fine work with a vengeance.

"I'll bet that bolt struck a house or barn not far away," nodded the embryo medical student.

"I wouldn't be surprised," replied Jack, as he came back to the center of the room and viewed the face of the dead man meditatively, as if he was wondering what sort of a character he had been in life.

The corpse was that of an apparently well-nourished man of about fifty years of age; the bearded features were coarse and rugged, as if he had roughed it upon the plains or in the mountains of the West.

"Looks as if he might have been a miner, eh, Charlie?" suggested Jack.

"Yes, or a prospector, or something of that sort."

"Or maybe a ranchman."

"Sure; or a bad man from Piute Flat, or some other tough joint in the wild and woolly."

"Hardly that," objected his chum. "It is not a bad face, by any means. I don't think I should be afraid to trust a fellow with his physiognomy."

"You have more confidence in his face than I have, then. I prefer the civilized man every day in the year."

"For looks, yes; but as for character—well, there are a good many undesirable individuals walking the streets of our big cities in fine linen and broadcloth to whom, I dare say, this poor fellow could give cards and spades in a lesson in morality. You can't always judge a book by its cover, old chap."

"That isn't any lie, either," admitted Charlie.

The young medical student had produced a cigarette from a flat, square box he kept hidden in some mysterious pocket in his jacket, and lighting it, began to fill the surgery with the odor of Turkish tobacco.

"I see you smoke coffin-nails occasionally," said Jack, beaming upon his friend. "Does the old gentleman stand for that sort of thing?"

"Hardly," answered Charlie, with a sly wink. "I have to keep 'em out of sight when he's around. I only tackle one once in a while."

Both boys smoked in silence for a moment or two, listening to the steady downpour of the rain on the tin roof, and the intermingling peals of thunder.

The vivid glare of the lightning was apparent in spite of the glow of the lamp.

"You'd have caught it in the neck if you had gone home to-night."

"I'd have caught it all over, you mean," grinned Jack. "By the way, you have a galvanic battery handy?"

"Yes. What do you want to do with it?" asked his chum, in some surprise.

"Well, I'll tell you," said Howard, confidentially. "This corpse looks so confounded lifelike that I can't quite get it out of my head that maybe he isn't as dead as he appears to be. It might be a case of suspended animation, for all you know."

"I never thought of that," replied Charlie, in a startled tone. "I'll test him right away, though I guess he's dead, all right. Father would do that before he used the knife on him."

"What are you going to do?"

"I'm going to apply a stethoscope over his heart. Then I'll try the eye test."

"Better get the battery and try that. If it doesn't produce results I'll believe this man is as dead as a door-nail."

Charlie stepped to the door leading to the box-like room at the rear of the place.

"Meyer," he called.

A short, round-faced German boy answered the hail.

"Veil, Sharlie, vot is der trouble mit you?"

"You know where our galvanic battery is, don't you?"

"I ped you," grinned the boy.

"Is it ready for use?"

"Yaw, I dink so."

"Fetch it into the surgery."

"So. I bed me your friend Yack is by the surgery, too, ain'd it?"

"Yes, he's there all right."

"Und you wants der battery? You blay some shokes upon dot dead mans, ain'd it?"

"Never mind about that. Just do as I tell you," and Charlie closed the door.

In a couple of minutes Meyer Dinkelspeil, Dr. Fox's boy of all work in the shop, came in with the box containing the battery.

"Put it down here, Meyer," said Jack. "You connect the wire, Charlie, while I turn the battery. Put the handles in the hands of the corpse."

"They are rigid."

"Place them between the fingers, then, and hold them tight," said Jack.

"Chinmany cribs!" exclaimed Meyer, looking on with wide open eyes. "You dink dot you voke him up mit dot foolishness?"

"Well, if we don't we'll try it on you afterwards," grinned Charlie.

"You vill I don'd t'ink," replied the German boy.

The apparatus being in place, Jack turned the electric current on.

Every moment the friction became brisker and the power stronger.

All at once the supposed corpse opened its eyes, which rolled in a strange manner.

Then a convulsive movement shook the body, the hands and feet twitched, and the jaw moved slightly.

"B'gee!" exclaimed Jack, "the man isn't dead at all."

"Shumping Moses!" ejaculated Meyer, almost frightened out of his skin. "Let me ouid!" and he made a rush for the door and disappeared.

"What a chump I was not to have tried that this morning when they fetched him in here," said Charlie, as his chum stopped turning the crank of the galvanic battery. "It was a partial failure of the heart's action, producing a trance-like state. Wait; I'll get some brandy."

He rushed into the store, measured out a gill of it, returned, and poured it down the man's throat.

The effect was instantaneous.

He who but five minutes before had been considered a corpse had actually come back to animation.

CHAPTER II.

THE COPPER SPECIMENS.

The man sat up on the slab, where, like many other unfortunate wretches, he had been placed preparatory to a post-mortem.

He stared wildly around him, not comprehending the circumstances in which he was placed.

There was a little of the brandy left in the graduating glass, and Charlie held it to his lips.

He gripped the boy's hands with his two great, rough fists, almost crushing the glass, and eagerly drained the liquor off.

Then he coughed, blinked his eyes, and sliding off the table, stood up.

He would have fallen, for he was as helpless as a scarecrow. But Charlie caught and supported him.

"Feel better now, do you?" asked the doctor's son.

"Yes, kinder so; only I feel plaguey weak, and I'm stone cold."

Charlie assisted him to the only chair in the surgery.

"What's been the matter with me, and where am I? This is a doctor's shop, isn't it?" he added, looking around and observing the bottles and instruments.

"You were brought here this morning," explained Charlie.

"This morning!" exclaimed the man, looking up at the lamp in its bracket. "And is it night now?"

"That's what it is."

"I must have been a long time out of my head, then, youngster," he said, with a look of perplexity on his features.

"You were more than that."

"How's that?"

"You fell down—to all appearances dead—at the Mugging

farm, three miles outside of town, and you were brought here to await an inquest."

"Fell down dead!" gasped the stranger, with a look of blank dismay.

"That's right. If you hadn't come to under the influence of that battery—which my chum suggested applying to you because you looked so lifelike—my father would have carved you up in the morning to find out what caused your death."

"By the great hornspoon!" cried the man, who had apparently been snatched from the grave by the experiment of Jack Howard. "I knowed it would come to this some day. I'm subject to epileptic fits. I've always been afeard I'd be buried alive in one of them."

"You've had a narrow escape," chipped in Jack, highly pleased at the success of his galvanic treatment.

"I guess I had," admitted the man, breathing hard and looking around him with a fearsome expression. "I'm very grateful to you young chaps for what you've done for me."

"Don't mention it," replied Jack. "We're mighty glad we were able to pull you around. If you don't mind, we should be pleased to know who you are."

"My name is Gideon Prawle. I'm a prospector and miner by occupation, but just at present I guess I ain't much better'n a tramp. I'm out of luck, that's all. But I've seen the time when I was worth a cool hundred thousand. But I spent it in drink, at the gaming table, and I was robbed of a good bit of it, and that's the whole story. I've been a blamed fool, but I hope to do better yet afore I die. I know something that ought to be worth another hundred thousand to me, and when I realize on it I shan't forget you young fellows, not by a jugful."

"You needn't worry about us," said Charlie, cheerfully, winking at Jack, as if it was his opinion the man had wheels in his head. "We don't expect to be paid for what we did for you."

The man saw the wink, and was evidently offended.

"Look here, my lads," he said gruffly; "you think because I look like a tramp that I'm a regular hobo—maybe that I'm talking through my hat. I reckon I kin prove what I say."

Then he began looking around the room.

"I had a grip with me this morning. Do you know what became of it?"

"I guess that's it over in the corner," said Charlie, pointing. "I took hold of it a while ago, and I must say it's precious heavy. What have you got in it—gold?" he concluded, with a grin.

"Fetch it here and I'll show you," said Prawle.

Charlie brought it forward and laid it at the man's feet.

The stranger started to bend down to undo the straps, but fell back in the chair with a groan.

"Give me another drink!" he gasped, plaintively, while the perspiration indicative of physical weakness appeared on his forehead.

Charlie rushed into the shop for more brandy and returned in a moment.

Gideon Prawle gulped it down at a draught, and it brought him instant relief.

"That's good stuff, and it warms me innards nicely," he said, smacking his lips with a sigh of satisfaction.

"It's the best in Sackville," said Charlie. "It's none of your common saloon firewater. No, sir; that is kept exclusively for the sick."

"I believe you," said the Westerner. "Now, if I might ask you another favor, it would be in the shape of something to eat. I'm most famished. Ain't had a mouthful since yesterday afternoon."

"Sure thing," replied Charlie, with alacrity. "I ought to have thought of that myself. Meyer," he called, stepping to the surgery door.

The German boy poked his head into the room in fear and trepidation.

"Vat haf you done mit der corpse?" he asked?" seeing the slab vacant.

Then, as his eyes roved to the chair, his hair almost stood on end with fright.

"Vot is dot?"

"Don't be a fool, Meyer," said Charlie impatiently, grabbing him in time to prevent him making a bolt. "The man was not dead. He was only in a trance, and we brought him out of it with the battery."

"So," replied the German boy, gazing at the stranger in fearful wonderment, "he been in dose transees under dot sheets der whole lifelong day, ain't it? Vot a great dings dose battery vos, I ped you."

"Go into the house, Meyer, and see what you can pick up in

the pantry in the way of a cold bite. Fetch a jug of milk from the cellar."

Meyer opened the door leading to the garden and looked out.

The storm had passed over the town by this time and was receding in a northwesterly direction.

"You'll find the entry door unlocked, Meyer," added Charlie.

"See that you don't make any unnecessary noise."

"I vill lood oud, I ped you," replied Dinkelspeil. "Off I voke der cook ub I wouldn't heard der last off it purty soon, I dink."

Then he vanished into the night.

Gideon Prawle, feeling better after the reaction, began undoing the straps of his grip.

Then he fumbled in his pocket for the key.

After taking out a somewhat rumpled shirt, a suit of underclothes and a couple of pair of socks, Prawle said:

"Now, young gents, I'm going to show you some of the finest specimens of real virgin copper ever dug out of mother earth."

"Oh!" exclaimed Charlie, a slight shade of disappointment in his voice, "I thought it was gold or silver quartz you had there. But copper——"

"Young man," said Prawle, diving one hairy paw into his grip and fishing out a magnificent specimen of raw copper, "look at that and hold your breath. There is ninety per cent. of copper in that hunk. Think of that! It has only to be separated from its rocky matrix, when it is ready for market. That chunk, just as I took it from the mine, where there are thousands and thousands of tons of it waiting to be dug out, is almost chemically pure copper. That mine, young gentlemen, is a marvel. There's millions in it. Nothing in this country to match it outside of the great Calumet and Hecla mine of Michigan, which has an annual production of 50,000,000 pounds."

Jack Howard examined the specimen with great interest.

"Where is this mine you speak of?"

Gideon Prawle winked one eye expressively and moistened his lips with his tongue.

"It's in Montana," he said, with a significant grin.

"That's a pretty big State," said Jack. "Whereabouts in Montana?"

"That's my secret," said Prawle, "and I'm going to Chicago to sell it."

"Then you have really located a valuable copper deposit?" asked Jack with kindling eyes, for he had a strong enthusiasm for anything connected with mines and minerals.

"That's the size of it, young gent. It's an old, deserted surface copper mine that was originally worked after a rude fashion by the Injuns, or some other folks who didn't know its value. There's millions of pounds there waiting for modern methods to bring it up to the light of day."

Jack and Charlie looked at the several rich specimens Prawle laid out for their inspection, and then at one another.

Evidently this tramp-like man, whom they had so strangely brought back to life, had stumbled on to a good thing.

Both of the boys had read stories of similar good things having been discovered by the merest accident, and the tales had excited their imagination at the time.

But this was different.

Here was evidence of a thrilling fact, and this prospect of sudden wealth, as it were, could not fail to have its effect on the two lads.

At this point Meyer made his appearance with an abundant cold repast, which, being placed before the stranger, he attacked like a famished wolf.

CHAPTER III.

THE FACE AT THE WINDOW.

"Then you actually own the mine you have been speaking of?" said Jack Howard, regarding Gideon Prawle with a fresh interest.

Had the boy at that moment looked toward the window of the surgery, which had been raised a couple of inches a few moments before by Charlie Fox, he might have noticed that there was an uninvited listener outside.

This eavesdropper was Otis Clymer, late dispensing clerk for Dr. Fox, who had been discharged for his irregular habits and pilfering propensities.

The man had made himself unpopular in Sackville, and but for the softness of the doctor's heart, would have long since been sent away.

He had an evil heart, and instead of leaving town, where he could not hope to get suitable employment, he had hung

Report represented him as an ex-prize fighter, and report was probably correct.

He looked it at any rate.

Some people even hinted that they believed his picture adorned the Rogues' Gallery of more than one big city.

At any rate, when he sported his summer crop of hair his smoothly shaven face would have stood as a good model for a convict's.

It is quite possible all the evil things whispered about Plunkett were more or less exaggerated, but, just the same, the good citizens of Sackville would have been well pleased to have parted company with him.

And this was the man Otis Clymer had cultivated as a friend.

The acquaintance began when Otis went into the billiard-room to play pool.

Then he made himself solid by treating the crowd frequently.

Finally Plunkett suggested that he come there to board.

Clymer fell in with the idea, and that settled whatever little reputation Otis had not already lost.

Dr. Fox put up with a great deal from his clerk, but he couldn't stand for that, and so he discharged the foolish young man.

It is probable Plunkett was playing Otis Clymer for a good thing, and would give him the bounce as soon as his funds ran out.

It was close on to three o'clock when Clymer reached the Plunkett House, all out of breath from his run.

As far as appearances went, Plunkett's was closed for the night.

But it wasn't really so.

There was a big game of pool on in the billiard and bar-room, the participants in which were mostly bargemen who plied on the river.

They were a rough lot, but you could not class them as really bad men, at least not the large majority.

They frequented Plunkett's because it was a free-and-easy resort, and was handy for them to congregate at.

Dave Plunkett was behind the bar, helping his assistant out. Clymer rushed into the place through a side door abutting on the river.

This was the only entrance open to customers after one o'clock in the morning.

Otis called for whisky, and poured out such a stiff dose that Plunkett looked at him in some surprise.

He swallowed it at a single gulp, and then asked Dave if he could see him in private.

"Cert," answered Plunkett, regarding his customer with a suspicious stare. "But what's up? You look excited. You ain't been doin' nothin' that'll get you into limbo, have you?"

"Never mind what I've been doing," retorted Clymer, shortly. "I've got something to tell you that you'll be glad to learn."

"Will I?" said Plunkett coolly. "Well, go into my little room, at the back of the office. I'll be with you in a moment."

"When I left here to-night," said Clymer to Plunkett, when the proprietor of the establishment joined him in his private room. "I was half-shot; but I was resolved to get square somehow with old Fox for discharging me from his shop."

Plunkett nodded as if he had suspected some such intention ran in his customer's brain.

"I may as well tell you I meant to set the old ranch on fire if I could get the chance, and I thought I could, as I had a key to the surgery in my pocket."

His companion said nothing, but regarded him with attention.

"When I reached there about half-past eleven I expected to find the coast clear, for I knew a dead man had been brought to the surgery in the morning for a post-mortem, and such being the case the room is usually not visited."

Plunkett, perhaps scenting a longish story, got out his pipe, filled it and began to smoke.

"I was surprised to find the surgery lit up, and, wondering what was going on inside, I crept up to the window overlooking the street and peered in. Fortunately, it was open several inches, and I heard something which set me on a new track."

"Umph!" muttered Plunkett.

Then Clymer proceeded to detail how the corpse had been brought back to life, much to his listener's amazement.

When he came to disclose what had transpired in relation to the copper mine out in Montana, Plunkett got interested.

"I determined to get possession of that mine myself," went on Clymer.

"You!" exclaimed Plunkett, in some astonishment.

"Yes, me. If I could get hold of the papers, especially the option on the property, I believed I could depend on you to see

me through in change for an interest in the mine that would be as good as a fortune to you."

"Well," said the hotel-keeper, more interested than ever.

"Well, I've got them," replied Clymer, triumphantly.

"You have?" in surprise.

"I have; but—" and Otis looked at his friend the landlord with a shaky expression.

"Well, what's the trouble?"

"The trouble is, I was detected in the act of setting the surgery on fire by a friend of the doctor's son, named Jack Howard, and had to run for it."

Plunkett whistled softly.

"You can't get out of town any too quickly for your personal safety, Clymer. Arson is a serious charge to have brought against you, and if convicted would mean anywhere from ten to fifteen years in the State prison."

"Yes, I realize that. But there is no use in crying over spilled milk. I'm going out to Montana to try and get possession of that copper mine, and what I want to know is, are you with me? This is my plan."

Otis Clymer produced the faded red pocketbook which belonged to Gideon Prawle, discoursed glowingly as to the exceptionally rich quality of the copper specimens brought from the mine by the prospector, and explained how he believed that a small amount of money judiciously invested in the person of Jim Sanders would secure them the ownership of the mine, as the option held by Prawle being in his (Clymer's) possession it could not be produced to complete the original bargain.

"Five hundred dollars ought to do the business for us," concluded Otis, eagerly. "Prawle, if he survives the drug I gave him, will be left out in the cold, and you and I will come into a mint of money when we sell our right and title to the mine to capitalists who know a good thing when they see it."

Plunkett was a cautious man as a rule—a virtue which kept him out of difficulties many a time; but the arguments advanced by Clymer seemed convincing, and at the same time excited his cupidity.

The two men talked over the scheme until daylight, and finally came to an agreement satisfactory to both.

Arrangements being completed, Clymer packed a grip with such articles as he considered indispensable and left the Plunkett House to catch a freight train which passed through Sackville at five o'clock.

Two days afterward, Plunkett himself vanished from town, leaving his establishment in charge of his wife.

CHAPTER VII.

ROCKY GULCH AND NEIGHBORHOOD.

It was a bright day one week from the stirring events just narrated.

The scene has changed from the bustling little Western town of Sackville to the wilds of the State of Montana.

The exact spot was a point three miles southeast of a rough-and-ready mining settlement known as Rocky Gulch, and seven miles, as the crow flies, from the town of Trinity on the North Branch of the Cheyenne River.

On one side was a rocky hill, pierced at this particular locality by a rude opening, which might correctly be termed a cave, though it looked more like a hole in the wall of rock than anything else.

On the other side was the head of a wide creek, to which the name of Beaver had been applied, and a narrow, circuitous stream ran into it from its source somewhere in the hills beyond.

Two men—one of whom bore a strong likeness to Otis Clymer, the other to Dave Plunkett—were standing midway between the cave and the creek.

"This must be the place," said the former, referring to a slip of paper he held in his hand.

"Where's the mine?" asked Plunkett, in a tone which showed he was not wholly pleased with the outlook.

"That hole yonder must be the entrance to it," suggested Clymer.

"If you think so, then the sooner we look into it and find out whether it is or not the better I'll be pleased. Before I plank up the dust I want to know what I'm investing in."

"That's all right," returned Clymer. "But you didn't expect to pick up a full-grown mine all in working order, with machinery on the ground, for a paltry two or three hundred dollars, did you?"

"I don't say that I did," asserted Plunkett; "but I ain't goin' to buy a hole in the ground without I've some idea of what's behind it. If you can show me real copper in there, that'll be

proof the man's story wasn't all moonshine. Then we'll go and hunt up this fellow Sanders and make it an object for him to forget he ever gave an option to somebody else, and buy him out."

"Come along, then. We've got torches which, when lighted, will show us the way through the darkness."

The two schemers walked over to the opening in the rock and entered the crevice.

They were out of sight for perhaps an hour, and when they emerged into the light of day once more it was apparent their quest had been satisfactory, for their eyes burned with an eager glow.

"I hope you're satisfied," said Otis Clymer, triumphantly.

"Satisfied!" exclaimed Plunkett. "Well, I guess I am—more'n satisfied. That there mine is a mint for us two. I'm with you hand and glove from this minute, but it must be halves—share and share alike, do you understand?"

"But you agreed to take a third in the first place," protested Clymer, half angrily. "The risk of getting those papers has all been mine. I ought to have the larger share."

"Can't help that," replied Plunkett, doggedly. "You can't do nothing without money, and I've got the dust. I've made up my mind to be an equal partner, and so halves it's got to be."

"But I hold the option on the ground," insisted Otis.

"Pooh! What good is it to you? It ain't in your name, and if it was you haven't the money to complete the deal. What you want to do with that option is to destroy it; then it won't turn up to put us in a hole, maybe. I'm goin' to look up Jim Sanders right away. If he's the soak you say he is, I shan't have much trouble in gettin' a bill of sale for that hill out of him. Now let us settle the thing right here. Are we even partners, or are we not?"

"You've got me where the shoe pinches, so I have to agree," said Clymer, reluctantly.

"Now you're talkin' sensibly. I never like to go into a deal where the other man has the bulge on me. I'm treatin' you perfectly fair, for money counts every time, and it'll take money to put this thing through. You don't know what trouble we may be up against if that fellow Prawle turns up out here and makes a squeal. Without me at your back you would be lost. Now that we're equal partners in the enterprise, I'll see you out of it same as myself, no matter what the consequences happen to be. So shake hands on it."

Otis Clymer saw that Plunkett was really master of the situation, and he had sense enough to understand that he couldn't do a thing without his companion's backing, so he held out his hand in an apparently cordial way, and the compact between the two was sealed then and there.

Plunkett produced a big flat bottle from one of his hip pockets, and they both drank success to the scheme in which they were embarked.

Then they took the back track, which brought them to the trail a mile distant, and the trail landed them in Rocky Gulch in the course of an hour.

The Gulch was a settlement of perhaps three hundred inhabitants.

It was not greatly different from some hundreds of other mining camps which have from time to time sprung up in the western wilderness in a night, flourished for a brief time, and then disappeared as the occasion for their existence passed away.

It had its stores, saloons, assay offices, so-called hotels, and all the business establishments that characterize such places.

It was picturesque and novel in its way, though life here was perhaps a sterner reality than in more civilized communities.

Many of the buildings were constructed of wood brought from Trinity, but by far the majority were of canvas, being both cheaper and more readily moved.

The stores, saloons and hotels were ranged side by side along what might be considered the main thoroughfare, while the canvas dwellings were pitched here and there irregularly.

The majority of the men at Rocky Gulch were industrious miners; but, as might be expected, there were not a few disreputable characters also—gamblers, whisky sellers and loafers, who lived on the sweat of other men's brows.

Though Trinity, the river town, was not far away, Rocky Gulch had found it necessary to elect a vigilance committee to preserve a semblance of order, and this committee had a repressing effect on the lawless element.

Many dangerous and worthless characters had been run out of the camp time and again, but for all that the inhabitants with one accord always went about armed, for no one could say when he might be up against trouble.

When Otis Clymer and Dave Plunkett came over from Trinity that morning to look up the copper mine they first put up at the Rocky Gulch Hotel.

This establishment, the most pretentious by the way in the place, consisted of three good-sized rooms, constructed of timber.

The front room, facing on the street, was occupied by a small office and a big bar; the middle apartment as a kitchen and dining-room, while the rear room was lined with rough bunks, without bedding of any kind, for the guests to spread their own blankets and sleep as best they could.

It was dinner time when the two schemers got back to Rocky Gulch, and after that meal they lost no time striking up acquaintance with many of the habitués with the view of finding out the present whereabouts of Jim Sanders.

But not one whom they accosted could say where Sanders might be found, though the general opinion seemed to be that Jim was blind drunk somewhere in Trinity.

He had disappeared from Rocky Gulch on the day he had received the hundred dollars from Gideon Prawle, and given that individual the option on his property.

That was all Clymer and Plunkett could learn, and they were grievously disappointed.

They were extremely anxious to settle up the business right away, lest Prawle appear on the scene and cause trouble.

"I don't see but that we must go back to Trinity," said Clymer. "The man doesn't seem to be here."

And so to Trinity they returned and began a search for Sanders there.

CHAPTER VIII.

JIM SANDERS.

On the afternoon of the following day a party of four stood facing the opening into the deserted copper mine.

The most prominent of the group was the bronzed and bearded Gideon Prawle, who had fully recovered from the effects of the drug administered to him by Otis Clymer.

The other three, it is almost needless to say, were Jack Howard, Charlie Fox and Meyer Dinkelspeil.

No difficulty had been experienced by Charlie in obtaining his father's permission to accompany Jack Howard and Mr. Prawle to Montana after Gideon had explained the situation to the doctor and shown him the magnificent specimens of pure copper he carried in his grip.

As soon as Prawle missed his pocketbook a new light broke in on those in the secret.

They agreed that the thief was Otis Clymer; that Meyer had been right when he said he had seen Clymer's face at the partly open window that night, and that the villain set fire to the surgery not only for the purpose of revenging himself on Dr. Fox, but to effectually get rid of Gideon Prawle as a bar to his newly-hatched plan of getting possession of the copper mine for himself.

Dr. Fox had strongly objected to losing the services of his German boy, who was a handy factor in his establishment.

But Meyer had made up his mind to go to Montana with the others, and it was useless to oppose him, for he declared he would surely run away of his own accord.

As Prawle and the two boys took his part, and interceded in his favor, the doctor was prevailed upon to give a reluctant consent to his going with the party.

"Well, boys, here we are on the ground at last," said Prawle, enthusiastically. "Here's the creek I spoke to you about which runs into the north branch of the Cheyenne River, five miles or so away, and yonder you see the hole in the rock which affords entrance to one of the richest copper deposits in the great Northwest. Unfortunately, it isn't really ours as yet till we find Jim Sanders, who sold me the option on the property."

"And it may never be ours as the case stands," said Jack, gloomily. "Otis Clymer, who robbed you of your pocketbook, and thereby came into possession of the option, has probably destroyed that document, and it's pretty certain he lost no time coming here to get the inner track of you. His object, of course, if he has been able to raise the money necessary for his purpose, is to meet Sanders and persuade that very unreliable person to sell him the ground, knowing that this course will be perfectly safe, since you will never be able to present the option yourself. If, after he has accomplished this, you interfere with your claim, he will demand that you produce the option, which, of course, you cannot do. Our only hope in this matter is to run across Jim Sanders before Clymer can get his work in. All you will then have to do is to

pay down the balance of the purchase money, and get a bill of sale of the ground."

"That's all right," spoke up Charlie Fox; "but even if he does succeed in getting the bulge on us, what is to prevent us having him arrested on a telegraphic order from Sackville, for the double crime of attempted murder and arson?"

"We could try that, of course, but I fear we should meet with many difficulties out here, especially if he is smart enough to make friends with an eye to that particular contingency, and the fellow is not such a fool but to understand and provide against the risk of arrest and subsequent extradition to Nebraska."

"Vell, off ve lets dot rooster got der best off us, den I votes ve go py der wilderness oud und kick ourselufs for a bardy of shackasses," interjected Meyer Dinkelspeil, with solemn earnestness.

"Good for you, Dutchman," said Prawle, slapping the round-faced youth on the shoulder. "And now, boys, follow me into the mine and I will show you a sight which will make your mouth water. You will see more copper in five minutes than you ever looked at in all your lives before."

A couple of hours later Gideon Prawle and the boys returned to Rocky Gulch.

They ate supper at the hotel, and having arranged to bunk there for the night, Prawle set about making inquiries relative to Jim Sanders.

"I never knowed Jim Sanders to be of sich importance as he seems to be jest now, stranger," said the landlord of the Rocky Gulch Hotel, when Prawle button-holed him in search of the information he wanted. "You air ther second one in two days wot wants to know ther wharabouts of Lazy Jim, as we call him, for we've never known him to work a day sence he came to ther Gulch nigh on to a year ago. 'Pears to me your face is kinder familiar, pard. Warn't you 'round these diggin's a fortnight or three weeks ago?"

"I was," said Prawle. "I bunked here a couple of nights and had my meals in your dining-room."

"Waal, now, I thought I warn't mistook in your phiz. We hev strangers comin' and goin' all ther time, but I generally remembers a face, once I take notice of it. What might be your object in wantin' to see Jim?"

"I want to see him about a bit of ground down by Beaver Creek I bought of him when I was here last. I paid him \$100 down, and owe him a small balance which I am now ready to settle."

"Waal, now thet accounts for ther wad Jim had at the time. Folks 'round here thought he mought hev robbed somebody, but as thar warn't no proof agin him, of course he warn't troubled. But he didn't stay 'round here more'n a day before he lighted out, and he hain't been heard from sence."

"You say there was somebody else looking for him yesterday?"

"Sure. A big cityfied-lookin' chap named Plunkett."

That name conveyed no information to Prawle, who had not heard of the landlord of Sackville's eyesore, and the prospector wondered if he was an emissary of Otis Clymer.

"Mought I ask what you wanted with thet there land down by ther krik?" inquired the proprietor of the Rocky Gulch Hotel, curiously. "It don't seem a likely sort of place thet I hev heard of. You hain't diskivered payin' dirt, hev you?"

This was asked with undisguised eagerness.

"No," replied Prawle, with assumed carelessness. "No such luck."

"Waal, now, I wuz in hopes you had," said the man, in a tone of disappointment. "'Cause why, these here diggin's aren't just what they wuz a year ago. Things look like as if they wuz goin' ter peter out. Waal, you hain't sed what you bought Jim's claim for. You aren't expectin' ter build a palis an' live thar jest for ther fun of ther thing, are you?"

"Well, hardly," replied Prawle, falling in with the man's rude humor. "I've discovered there's a peculiar kind of stone near the creek that might be used to advantage in railroad building, and—"

"Oh, I see," said the landlord of the hotel, thrown off the scent, as Prawle intended. "Waal, I wish you luck with it."

Prawle asked several other inhabitants of Rocky Gulch about Sanders, but each one had the same answer—Jim had not been seen in the Gulch for over two weeks, and they did not know where he was.

"Kind of hard luck, isn't it?" said Prawle, when he rejoined his companions, after more than an hour's ineffectual search for a clew to Sanders' present whereabouts.

"I should say it is," replied Jack Howard. "What are we going to do?"

"We'll have to go back to Trinity in the morning and see

what we can learn in that place. By the way, I heard there was another person trying to locate Sanders."

"Otis Clymer!" exclaimed Jack and Charlie in a breath.

"No," replied Prawle, shaking his head. "It was a big man, named Plunkett."

"Plunkett!" shouted Charlie Fox, in a tone of astonishment. "Not Dave Plunkett?"

"I didn't hear what his first name was. Do you know somebody by that name?"

"The cheap hotel where Otis Clymer lodged of late in Sackville is kept by a man named Dave Plunkett. I'll bet Clymer has taken him into his confidence as a moneyed partner in this enterprise, and so that he himself can keep under cover as much as possible. He's a cute rascal."

"If that's the case," said Gideon Prawle, reflectively, "we've got our work cut out for us to beat the pair of them. Tell me what you know about this Plunkett."

Charlie gave the prospector the history of Dave Plunkett's operations in Sackville, so far as he knew, as well as his opinion of the man's character.

"Well," said Prawle, "I judge if he rounds up Jim Sanders before we do, it'll be all day with us. Without that option I haven't got the ghost of a claim on the ground. It's a thousand pities things have turned out as they have. Who would have suspected we had a listener that night in your pop's surgery?" looking at Charlie Fox.

"I never heard of such confounded hard luck," returned Charlie, kicking the wooden front of the hotel spitefully in his silent wrath. "Just when we have sighted a big fortune for the crowd of us—not to speak of a million or two which, by right of discovery, is coming to you, Mr. Prawle—in steps a pair of unmitigated rascals, with every chance of scooping the trick at our expense."

"By shinger!" chipped in Meyer; "do we stood dot? I feels so mad dot I would like to do somedings already yet."

At another time Jack and Charlie would have given the German boy the laugh, but they were not in laughing humor at that moment.

The outlook was altogether too serious.

Next morning the rig which had brought them from Trinity to Rocky Gulch was hitched up, and Gideon Prawle and the three boys started back along the trail.

They had perhaps accomplished half the distance to the river town, when a solitary horseman, astride of a wretched nag, was seen coming toward them in the distance.

"By shinger!" exclaimed Meyer. "Off dot don'd peen a scarecrow I'm a liar!"

"He certainly looks like a hard case," said Jack, watching the stranger's approach with not a little curiosity.

When the distance between them had lessened about one half Prawle, who had been examining the newcomer with great attention, suddenly gave a shout that fairly electrified his young companions.

"Jim Sanders, by all that's wonderful!"

CHAPTER IX.

THE MEETING ON THE TRAIL TO TRINITY.

"Vot!" shouted Meyer, almost losing his grip on the seat and tumbling off into the trail. "Shim Sanders! Der mans ve vos looking for? It don'd been possible!"

"It is Jim Sanders," said Prawle, in a tone of conviction.

"Then the country's safe!" cried Jack and Charlie, with one accord, shaking hands across seats, and feeling as if they could have jumped off and turned a dozen handsprings in the excess of their glee.

"Shook mit me, too, you fellers!" cried Meyer, smiling all over his round face. "I vos so glad, by shinger, I could oxplode mit interior combustications!"

Jim Sanders was one of the toughest looking specimens of humanity the boys had ever laid eyes on.

His garments, of a shade and texture hard to determine, were a sight to behold.

The majority of his toes protruded through his broken boots. As to his hat, the less said about that the better.

He was fairly sober, for a wonder; but gave every evidence that he was just emerging from a long spree.

Sanders blinked at the party on the wagon as he approached. The horse had been pulled in from a smart trot to a slow walk.

When they came together he turned his animal out of the trail to allow the rig to pass.

As a matter of course, Gideon Prawle, who was driving, pulled up, and Sanders, having also stopped, addressed the miserable-looking wreck.

"Hello, Jim Sanders!"

"Howdy, pard!"

"I want to see you, Jim."

"Waal, I reckon you're lookin' at me," with a silly grin.

"You don't seem to recollect me, Jim," said Prawle.

"Dunno as I do. I mought hev seen yer before, an' then, ag'in, I moughtn't."

"My name is Gideon Prawle."

"Waal, pard, that doesn't help me ter place yer."

"No?" answered Gideon, in some surprise.

Jim Sanders shook his head to and fro slowly, while the boys regarded him blankly.

"So you don't remember that I paid you \$100 on account three weeks ago for a bit of ground you own down near Beaver Creek, and that I was to pay you \$200 more some time within sixty days?"

At the mention of the money a light seemed to suddenly break in on the fallow brain of the lonesome-looking rider.

"Are yer the stranger what owes me that \$200 on my old pard's claim at the krik?" he asked, with unfeigned eagerness.

"I'm the man, Jim."

"Waal, now, I wouldn't hev knowed it," he replied, with a grin. "When yer goin' ter settle up?"

"Now, if you're ready."

"Ef I'm ready? Waal, I reckon."

"Boys," said Prawle, "we must settle this thing right here now. Got a pencil and paper?"

"I've got a fountain-pen, which is better; and I'll tear a blank page from my note-book," said Jack Howard, quickly producing the articles from his pockets.

"What yer about now?" asked Sanders, regarding these preparations dubiously.

"I'm writing out a bill of sale for you to sign; then I'll hand you the \$200," said Prawle.

"Waal, I'll sign it ef I kin; but I hain't much at drivin' a pen, pard," said the animated scarecrow, slowly and doubtfully, as if he had very little confidence in his powers of chirography.

"Here you are," said Prawle, jumping off his seat. "Come around to the back of the wagon, so you'll have something to lean on."

Jim Sanders dismounted from the sorry-looking nag, which looked as red-eyed and tired as himself, and moved with an uncertain kind of gait to the rear of the wagon.

Prawle put the bill of sale of the property, with the book under it, on the open end of their vehicle, and offered the fountain-pen to Sanders.

He took it gingerly between his knotty fingers, and fumbled with it a moment.

"Whar's ther ink, pard?"

"The ink is on the pen."

"So 'tis. That's funny. I didn't see yer dip it inter no ink bottle."

"That's what we call a fountain-pen. The ink is carried in the handle."

The explanation seemed all Greek to Sanders.

"Some new-fangled idee, eh? Waal, here goes," leaning over the document. "Whar do I put it?"

"Write your name here," said Prawle, indicating the place with the tip end of his little finger.

Sanders flourished his arm and then stopped.

"By shinger," ejaculated Meyer, who had been aching to say something for the last five minutes, "dot rooster vill dook all day mit dose pizness, ain'd it?"

"Say, pard," asked Sanders, "how do you make a 'J'? Et's s'long sense I writ my name I've clean forgot how ter begin."

"Better hurry him up, Mr. Prawle," spoke up Jack. "There's two men coming this way at a quick trot."

Gideon stepped out and looked ahead along the trail.

Jack had spoken the truth.

A couple of horsemen were advancing upon them from the direction of Trinity at a rapid pace.

Prawle tore another sheet from the note-book and wrote Jim's name very ligibly.

"There's a copy for you. Imitate that as closely as you can."

"Is thet my name?" asked Sanders, looking at the writing with some curiosity.

"That's your name."

"Waal, now, I wouldn't hev known it."

Then he began a laborious effort to duplicate the signature.

Needless to say, his attempt was a rank failure, but still, a handwriting expert might have been able to testify to its genuineness.

"Come down here, Jack," said Prawle, "and witness his signature. You'd better come, too, Charlie."

The boys dismounted in a twinkling and signed their names as witnesses.

As soon as this formula was completed Prawle pulled out a wad of bills, representing money advanced by Jack Howard and Dr. Fox, counted out \$200, and passed it over to Sanders.

"Count it, Jim, and see that it's all right."

"I reckon it's all right, pard," replied the scarecrow, stuffing it into one of his pockets.

"You seem to be going to Rocky Gulch," said Prawle, as he put the rest of the money away, and the boys started to remount to their seats.

"Thet's whar I'm bound," grinned Sanders, backing toward his horse, which had meekly stood with his head down and his ears back, the position in which he had been left by his master.

"Well, be good to yourself. Don't blow all that money in at once. Remember there's \$200 in that wad."

Jim's red-rimmed eyes seemed to brighten at the mention of the amount.

No doubt he had visions of another long, glorious drunk at Rocky Gulch, or elsewhere.

To get loaded clean up to the neck, and keep so indefinitely, was probably Jim's idea of supreme bliss.

At any rate, that was the accepted opinion of those who knew him best.

As Gideon Prawle put up his foot to mount to the front seat of the wagon a sudden exclamation from the boys attracted his attention.

He looked ahead, and saw that the two oncoming strangers were almost upon them.

"Mr. Prawle," said Jack, in a low, tense tone, "we've turned the trick not a moment too soon. Here come Otis Clymer and Dave Plunkett."

"The dickens you say!" exclaimed Gideon, as he started up the horse and looked hard at the two men. "Which is which?"

"Clymer is the smaller of the two."

"I've a great mind to have it out with him right here for trying to do me up," said Prawle, with a resolute look and a snap of his eyes.

His hand instinctively sought his hip pocket, where the butt of a heavy revolver protruded.

Jack caught his arm just as Charlie spoke up:

"What are you doing out here, Otis Clymer?"

A dark scowl was the only response, as the horsemen, who easily recognized the party on the wagon, pushed their animals around the vehicle at a respectable distance.

"Well, we're on to your little game, all right," added Charlie, with a triumphant grin. "It won't do you any good to hunt up Jim Sanders now. We've met him and bought the property; so the best thing you can do—you and your friend Plunkett—is to go back whence you came. You're out of it for good. And more—I warn you, if we meet you where the law can lay its hands on you, Clymer, we shall have you arrested for a certain night's work in Sackville a week ago."

The two horsemen were clearly taken aback by Charlie's words.

Clymer uttered an oath, while Plunkett bit his lips savagely.

Both put their hands to their hip pockets.

"Stop!" thundered Prawle, yanking out his gun so swiftly as to almost take the boys' breath away. "Throw up your right hands and move on, or I'll drill you both quicker'n greased lightning."

And he meant it, too, they noticed.

Both Clymer and Plunkett were subdued, and they obeyed the command.

Then Prawle, keeping his eye on them until out of close range, drove on.

CHAPTER X.

GIDEON PRAWLE AND HIS ASSOCIATES TAKE POSSESSION OF THE MINE.

"Now, boys," said Gideon Prawle, after the party had reached Trinity and returned the rig to the stable where it belonged, "I've been considering your proposal that we make arrangements to go by water to the mine—which is now ours past all doubt—camp there, and with suitable tools start in to dig out a carload or two of copper, in order to show what the yield of the mine looks like."

"I hope you've looked at it in a favorable light, Mr. Prawle," said Jack Howard, eagerly. "Charlie and I have talked the matter over, and Meyer has also had his little say, and it is agreed between us that we'd like nothing better than a four or six weeks' whack at the copper deposit, which seems to promise such handsome results."

"Well, I don't know as I have any special objections to falling in with your idea," replied the big prospector, heartily. "The experiment won't cost such a lot of money, and as the copper is right in sight on the ground level, why, so long as you are aching for a bit of hard work to limber up your muscles, and are satisfied to rough it and take things as they come, you can consider the matter settled, as far as I am concerned."

"Hurrah!" shouted Charlie, throwing his cap in the air.

"Shimmany cribs! I like me dot," chipped in Meyer. "I would sooner monkey mit dot gobber mines den I would gone back to Sackville und work apoud der drug shops."

"Then the sooner we get down to business the better, I think," said Jack, in his breezy way. "Of course you will make all the preparations, Mr. Prawle, as you are well acquainted with such matters. We shall want a flatboat, I should think, to float our cargo of copper to this town, and afterward reship it East to market. We ought to be able to get a good bit of ore out of the mine before Charlie has to return home."

"We shall have to have a couple of good, serviceable tents, a small cook stove, cooking utensils, blankets, shovels, picks, a couple of iron barrows, and a lot of other things which I needn't mention," said Mr. Prawle.

"Don't forget some fish lines. You said there was fish in the north branch," said Charlie, who prided himself on being a first-class disciple of Isaak Walton. "We could go down there about sunrise mornings and catch our breakfast fresh from the river."

"Yaw, I ped you," assented Meyer, who imagined he was a great fisherman, too, though he had been known to spend many an afternoon fishing in the stream which flowed by Sackville and yet come home without a solitary shiner.

"That's right. It will be some amusement for us," agreed Jack. "All work and no play——"

"Makes Yack a dull poy, I ped you!" grinned Meyer, taking the words out of Howard's mouth.

"Dutchman, you are right," laughed Gideon Prawle.

"Sure ding. Why not?" retorted Meyer, opening his mouth to its full extent.

"Don't do that again," remonstrated Jack, with a sober face. "One of us might get in and be lost."

"So-o-oo!"

"Well, Mr. Prawle," said Charlie Fox, "you buy what you think we ought to have. Do you think you will have any trouble finding a suitable flatboat?"

"Not at all. I know where I can hire one. We can float down the river and pull it up the creek ourselves. When we've loaded it with copper, however, we'll have to charter a small steamer to tow it back here."

"With the first money we make I think it would be good policy to put a smelter up on the ground. We ought to get things in good running order before we start out to form a company and take outsiders into the enterprise. You may perhaps know what capitalists are. They want to get the cream of everything they are asked to back, and I, for one, don't believe in letting too much of a good thing get away from us," said Jack, earnestly.

"You've a pretty level head, Jack," replied the prospector, who had imbibed a considerable amount of respect for the boy's ideas and good practical sense.

"Thank you for your good opinion," answered the bright boy. "One has got to keep his eyes open and his wits on edge to get along in these days of close competition."

"I move we adjourn," chipped in Charlie, with a laugh. "I'm getting hungry, and would sooner discuss a good dinner than anything else at present."

"Second der motions," put in Meyer, licking his chops at the suggestion of something to eat.

"A motion to adjourn is always in order," laughed Jack. "Those in favor of making a bee-line for the hotel dining-room will say aye."

"Aye—aye!" from Charlie and Meyer.

"It is carried unanimously, and the meeting stands adjourned pro tempore."

"Vot is dot?" asked Meyer.

"What is what?"

"Bro demporay—dot's a funny words."

"That's Latin, and means 'for the time being'—see?" and Jack fetched the German boy a dig in the ribs that made him jump.

"So-o!"

Two days later the setting sun saw the prospector and the three boys, now attired in regular mining outfits, toiling up the bank of Beaver Creek with a small flatboat in tow.

It was no easy work, the reader may well believe; but the boys were strong and hearty, and stuck to their labor like good

fellows, the only kick so far coming from Meyer, who was fatter and less able to hustle than the others.

"By shinger," he said, after they had accomplished about a mile of the way, "vhen do ve got py der ends of dis yob? Dere vill be noddings but a wet spot left off me py der dimes ve shall be done mi id," and he dashed the perspiration from his face.

"The trouble with you, Meyer," said Charlie, who was pulling on a line right back of him, "is that you're too fat. It will do you good to get rid of some of your surplus flesh."

"Is dot so? It vill done me good to make a skelingtons off mineseluf you dink? Vell, I differ mit you."

"Why, you chump," exclaimed Charlie, "you've been doing nothing else but getting fat ever since you came to work for us in Sackville."

"Don'd you fool yourself mit any such idea as dot," retorted Dinkelspeil. "I don'd peen half so fat as vhen I landed py Ellis Island in New York, I ped you."

"You must have been as round as a billiard ball, then," laughed Charlie.

"Get ouid mit your shokes. Dere's some more off mine fat gone already yet," as he mopped his round countenance again.

It was nearly dark when they reached the head of the creek. Meyer at once flopped on the ground and began to fan himself with his soft hat.

After a short rest all hands got busy carrying the tents ashore and putting them up.

Then the next thing in order was to rig up their culinary department, so supper could be got under way.

Meyer volunteered to act as cook.

His services were accepted, as Charlie vouched for his possessing some ability in that line.

"Yust wait a liddle vhiles," he said to Prawle. "I vill make you lick your shops over vot I puts before you, I ped you."

And every one declared he was not such a bad cook after all, when they saw and tasted the fried fish and potatoes, backed up by a steaming pot of fragrant coffee, which the German boy prepared in short order.

"I move that Meyer Dinkelspeil be appointed chief cook and bottle washer of this camp," said Jack, when the meal was concluded.

And the motion was carried by acclamation.

CHAPTER XI.

HIS NAME WAS MEEN FUN.

The sun was just rising above the distant horizon next morning when Jack woke up, pushed open the folds of the canvas of the tent occupied by himself and Charlie Fox, and looked out.

He saw a figure poking around the cook stove under the awning erected to protect the cooking department from the weather, and his first idea was that it was Meyer preparing an early breakfast.

A second glance, however, assured him it was altogether a different sort of person from the fat German boy.

"It was, in fact, a gaunt, sad-eyed Chinaman."

"B'gee!" he exclaimed. "it's a Chink. He'll be stealing some of our things if I don't head him off."

He pulled on his garments and dashed into the open.

"Hello, there!" he shouted. "What are you doing there?" The Chinaman turned around slowly, and grinned a ghastly sort of grin.

"Me hungly, allee samee starvee. Fastee heap fo' day. Feeeee all gone."

His looks certainly bore out his statement, and Jack felt sorry for him at once.

"Where did you come from, John?"

"San Flancisco."

"So far as that, eh?"

The heathen nodded solemnly and then rubbed his stomach.

"All right," said Jack; "I'll get you something to eat."

The boy found some remains of the fish they had had the evening previous, also a chunk of bread.

He handed them over to the Chinaman, and the fellow made short work of them.

"Feelee bettee now," he said, with a cheerful grin on his sallow countenance.

"Tasted good, did it?"

"Bettee lifee. You wantee hile? Wolkee cheap."

At this juncture Gideon Prawle issued from his tent, followed by Meyer.

"Shimmany Christmas!" ejaculated Dinkelspeil, as soon as his gaze rested on the Mongolian. "Vot you calls dot fellers? Oh, yaw, he vos a Shinyman, ain'd id?"

"Where did you spring from, Chink?" asked Prawle, surveying the new arrival curiously.

"No springee. Walkee long way. No lidée on lailload. Causee why, no gottee scads. Bouncee quickee no payee."

"Well, I guess yes. Looks half starved, don't he?" to Jack.

"Say, you ought to have seen him eat what we had left over. Wants a job."

"What can you do, Chink?"

"Most anything. But no callee Chink. Namee Meen Fun."

"Oh, your name is Meen Fun, eh?"

"Collect," grinned the moon-eyed one.

"Where did you work last?"

"San Flancisco."

"What did you do—wash clothes?"

"No washee. Fo' companee bling from China. Catchee place in Chinee bankee on Dupontee stleet. Workee up to nicee fat job, allee samee plesident."

"What's that?" asked Prawle. "President of the Chinese bank?" in some amazement.

"Sure popee," grinned the Celestial. "Me startee out on own hooke. Keepee bookee, keepee cashee, pay intlest, sabbe?"

"He must be a peach," remarked Jack.

"More like a big liar," grunted Prawle. "They all are."

"Heap fine bankee, fine safee, heap big sign. Plenty Chinaman deplositors come filst off. One he say, 'Mistee Bankee Plesident, me catchee some monee wash-washy—maybe tlee hunded dollah—you keepee him for me?' I tellee him, 'Sure Mikee. Puttee in safee. Pay intlest.'"

"The dickens you say," gasped Prawle.

"Another comee; he say, 'Me winee sebbenty dollah, catchee buttee in guttee—makee heap fine cigalletes—you keepee?' 'Allee light,' me say, and sockee wad in safee. Plenty scads come inee—more'n 'steen hunded dollah. Me livee high—eatee loast beef, maccaloni, flied rice, lasbelly puddin'. All sudden Chinamen all comee and wantee boodle back. Want buy lottee tickee, some other foolee t'ingee. Me lookee in safe, countee scads, tellee come back to-mollah fo' clockee, gettee wad den. When all go, me pullee down blind, packee glip, puttee in boodle, skippee out filst tlain. go to Saclamento, changee namee, gettee dlunk, blowee in wad, laise Old Nickee; in mornin' findee me busted, walkee lailload tie, bimeby gettee lost, most starvee, now me leady to wolk—cookee, washee, ilon—anything."

"Suffering jewsharps, if you ain't the biggest liar I ever met—and I've seen some good ones in my time—you may throw me into the creek!" said Prawle, in a tone of disgust.

"No hee—tellee tluth allee samee Meican man."

"Are you willing to wheel a barrow?" asked Prawle, pointing to one of those useful instruments.

"Sure t'ingee. Me wheelee ballow."

"All right. We'll see how long you last."

"Me lastee allee light."

So Meen Fun was admitted to the companionship of the party, and after breakfast was put to work helping to take the rest of the things from the flatboat.

When at length Prawle, Jack and Charlie entered the mine, leaving Meyer on the outside, they took Meen Fun with them.

Several lanterns were suspended at various points within the old deserted copper mine, and their bright glow furnished sufficient illumination for digging and other purposes connected with the mining operations.

Then the boys, under the experienced direction of Gideon Prawle, got busy; and it was not very long before Meen Fun made his appearance on the outside with his first load.

It was Meyer's duty to separate the copper ore from the loose dirt, and pitch the former into the bottom of the boat.

"Dis vos a skinch," mused the German boy, when he started in to make himself useful; but, by and by, when the novelty of the work began to wear off, and the heat of the sun commenced to get in its work, Dinkelspeil began to entertain quite a different opinion of the job.

"By shimmany! I beliefs dis vos harder den verkings der pestels in der mortars for oldt Fox. Efery dimes I finish up a pile dot Shinyman brings oud anodder load. Vouldn't it make you veeps to dink off it?"

But there was no let-up for Meyer till it was time for him to set about preparing the noonday meal.

"Noddings vill be left off me bud a grease spot by der dime dot old poat vas filled up."

When Meen Fun observed Meyer beginning his culinary operations he dropped the barrow and offered to assist.

"Nein," objected Dinkelspeil. "Go py your pizness apoud quick. I mineseluf am der shief cook und pottle vashers."

"Me makee nicee lasbelly puddin's you catchee bellies."

"Off you don'd chase yourseluf purty quick I vill fall on you, und den you vill haf to be swept up."

So Meen Fun had to return to his wheelbarrow.

"We've done pretty well for a beginning, haven't we, Mr. Prawle?" asked Jack, when they knocked off work about noon.

"Certain sure you have. Rather close in that hole. We must try and dig an outlet through the roof."

"What are we going to do about that big mass of ore in the corner?" asked Charlie.

"Shatter it with small charges of dynamite. Those small cases I had you move ashore so carefully and put yonder under that canvas covering—that's explosive."

Then all hands sat down to dinner.

CHAPTER XII.

THE FLIPPING OF THE MONGOLIAN.

It was undoubtedly hot and dirty work in the mine; but as it had been entered into at their own request and suggestion, neither Jack nor Charlie had any complaint coming.

They stuck down to their labor all the afternoon, and never gave either Meen Fun or Meyer a moment's rest.

"I never would have believed it if some one had told me that that Chink would stick out that job," said Prawle. "I haven't heard him make a squeal since he started in. He'll prove of great assistance if we only can keep him."

"Where is he going to sleep?" asked Jack.

"We'll give him a piece of canvas, and he can roll himself up in it just outside the cave opening."

"It seems funny to me that if he was up to Rocky Gulch he didn't get work on the sluices," said Jack. "I noticed quite a number of Chinamen employed there by the miners."

"Maybe he came from another direction," suggested Charlie.

"Do you think the fellow is to be trusted, Mr. Prawle?" inquired Jack.

"Do I think so?" repeated the prospector, slowly. "Hardly. We've got to keep an eye upon him in a sort of general way. These Celestials are born thieves, and slicker than greased lightning. I haven't forgotten that yarn the rascal spun this morning."

"I never heard anything more comical," grinned Charlie. "The idea of that Mongolian being the president of a Chinese bank in San Francisco, skinning his depositors and then skipping the town!"

"And the nerve of him in telling us all about it," said Jack. "Just as if he thought it would be a sort of recommendation."

"Wanted to impress us with the idea how smart he was."

"Come to think of it," said Gideon Prawle, reflectively, "I wouldn't be surprised if there was something back of his coming here."

"What do you mean, Mr. Prawle?" asked Jack, in some surprise.

"Well, I don't mean anything in particular, only that Mongolian, the more I think of it, doesn't strike me favorably. He's altogether too willing, when you come to consider the matter. I noticed him several times casting an inquisitive look about the spot we're working; and all about the place, for that matter. You can't tell anything about these Chinks. He may have been run out of Rocky Gulch, for all we know."

The more they sized up Meen Fun the more they began to distrust the Mongolian—at least Gideon did, and he had had a long and varied experience with the moon-eyed foreigners.

After a good bath in the creek Prawle and the boys sat down to supper, Meen Fun taking his just out of earshot.

When pipes were lighted, and the four were seated on the bank of the creek, the Celestial approached and betrayed an inclination to join in.

"You lettee me talkee, too? Feelee belly lonesome."

"Look here, John; have you been up Rocky Gulch way?"

"Locky Gulch? No sabbe him."

"Where did you come from, anyway?" continued Prawle, eyeing him with suspicion.

"San Flancisco."

"I mean where did you come from last?"

The bright almond eyes twinkled as he answered:

"Malysville."

"Marysville, eh?"

"Sule Mikee," with a grin.

"And you walked all the way here from that town?"

"Yep, me 'spect so."

"What made you come out here into the wilderness?"

"Wantee wolkee."

"You could get all the work you wanted in Marysville, couldn't you?"

"Not muchee."

"I know better, John."

"You know better?"

"That's what I do. Don't imagine you can fool me, you almond-eyed Mongolian. If you don't tell us the truth we'll run you out of this camp in a brace of shakes."

"Whatee fo' lun out? Me wolkee lots. Like stay."

"How much wages do you want?"

"S'pose you pay me one dollah day; me satisfied."

"Well, we'll think it over. Go over there and sit down."

The Celestial took the hint and moved himself several yards away.

After that the future prospects of the mine occupied the attention of the party.

"When the company is formed the general offices could be located at Trinity," suggested Jack.

"Why not at Helena?" said Charlie. "It would look more important."

"The directors will decide that," said Gideon Prawle.

"Am I to be a director?" asked the doctor's son.

"I'll see that you get stock enough to entitle you to a representation," said the prospector. "It will be fixed so that we four hold the controlling interest. Of course, I will have a great deal the biggest share; but I'll arrange matters so that if anything happens to me you lads will step into my shoes, for I haven't kith nor kin in the world."

"I'm going to turn in," said Jack, with a yawn.

"Same here," put in Charlie Fox.

"Und I dink I'll yust go py mine ped also likewise," said Meyer, sleepily.

"You boys couldn't do better," acquiesced Prawle. "You are not used to roughing it yet. By the time the flatboat is loaded you will begin to feel hardened."

Prawle showed the Mongolian where he could curl himself up for the night, and then, after making a tour of inspection around the immediate vicinity, he entered his tent.

Meyer was snoring loudly in his blankets.

The prospector picked up his Remington rifle, and assured himself that it was ready for action if wanted.

Then he pulled off his boots and lay down on his blanket without wrapping it about him.

A profound stillness reigned outside.

Not the slightest breath of wind was stirring the leaves of the trees scattered round about.

It was midsummer, and the night air was warm and as clear as a bell.

An hour passed, and everything remained unchanged.

Then a lightening up of the distant horizon heralded the coming of the full moon, which soon rose clear of all obstructions and shot a silver pathway along the surface of the creek.

The mouth of the mine, the tents, and every object of the little camp was brought out in full relief.

At that moment something issued from the cave opening.

It was Meen Fun.

Like a shadow he glided up to the tent which sheltered Jack and Charlie.

He listened intently, and then cautiously drew back the flap, inch by inch, until his yellow face was framed in the opening.

Satisfied the two boys were asleep, he softly retreated and went through the same performance at the other tent, with even more caution.

He noted the positions of the two sleepers—Meyer making weird music with his open mouth as he lay on his back thoroughly tired out.

Creeping into the tent on all fours, he crept over to the center pole, and slipped Prawle's jacket off the nail from which it hung.

With that in his possession he made his escape from the tent.

Outside he thrust his fingers into the pockets, one after another, and extricated a new pocketbook Gideon had bought to replace the old one stolen from him.

This he opened, took out a small wad of bills, which he thrust into some crevice of his loose garments, then, with the pocketbook in his hand, he started off in the direction of the trail leading to Rocky Gulch.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE LITTLE SCHEME WHICH FAILED.

The one main street of Rocky Gulch was lit up from end to end by the numerous kerosene lamps which burned in the saloons and other buildings lining the right-hand side of the thoroughfare.

Every drinking place had its crowd of patrons, attracted by various devices, such as a wheezy piano played by an indifferent performer, an asthmatic flute, from which uncertain notes floated out on the night air, or a squeaky violin in the hands of a poor musician.

The miners of Rocky Gulch, however, were not particular to a shade.

Like children, they were easily pleased by any old thing.

And the more liquor they imbibed the less they cared for the entertainment provided to draw them into the saloon.

In the very last house of resort in the row two men were seated by themselves at a rough apology for a table, talking earnestly together and paying very little attention to the rest of the assembled company, which had begun to thin out somewhat.

The pair in question was composed of Otis Clymer and Dave Plunkett.

They had arrived at Rocky Gulch the day before, after a visit to Trinity, where they had gone after finding they had been euchred in the mine scheme. They had made this trip for the purpose of shadowing Gideon Prawle and the boys, in an effort to discover some means of recovering their lost advantage.

They had found no difficulty in becoming acquainted with the immediate plans of the rightful owners of the deserted copper mine, and laid plans accordingly to try and circumvent them.

They had made friends with the proprietor of the saloon in which they were now seated, and instead of putting up at the hotel when they came back this time, they arranged to bunk in this place.

After sounding the saloonkeeper, whose name was Coffey, they had partially taken him into their confidence—that is, to the extent of telling him they wanted to get possession of the Sanders claim at Beaver Creek—without betraying the fact that the ground covered a copper deposit of great value.

They told Coffey that the Prawle party had got ahead of them, and they were anxious to turn the tables on them.

Coffey was a man of no principle at all, and this fact had recommended him to their notice.

He suggested to Clymer and Plunkett that a good plan would be to try and steal the bill of sale given by Jim Sanders to Prawle.

As neither of the two conspirators had the nerve to engage in such a hazardous enterprise himself, Coffey proposed, for a \$20 bill, to send a Chinaman he employed about the premises on this mission to the camp of the newcomers at the creek.

He introduced them to Meen Fun, who said he was the individual for the job.

So the Mongolian was duly instructed and dispatched.

"If he succeeds in getting his fingers on that paper the game will be in our hands," said Plunkett to his partner in the nefarious scheme, as they sat at the table in Coffey's saloon awaiting the return of their moon-eyed agent.

"Yes," coincided Clymer, "for we have already managed to get a duplicate from Sanders in our own names to take the place of the original. A hundred dollar bill will induce the old soak to swear that he sold the claim to us, and that he doesn't know anything about this man Prawle and his companions."

"Coffey says we can depend on the Celestial to get the document, if it is to be obtained, for he says the Old Nick isn't a circumstance alongside of Meen Fun," returned Plunkett, blowing a cloud of smoke ceiling-ward as he puffed one of the establishment's villainous cigars.

"If it is to be obtained!" ejaculated Clymer, with an ugly frown. "It must be obtained, or—"

"Well," remarked Plunkett, as his companion paused, "or what?"

"We must adopt extremer measures."

"Such as, for instance?" asked Plunkett, with a wicked leer.

"No use of anticipating matters," returned Clymer, wriggling out of an explanation; "let us wait till we see what the Mongolian accomplishes."

"Huh!" snorted Plunkett, regarding his associate contemptuously.

"It is now nearly twenty-four hours since Meen Fun departed on his mission," said Clymer, reflectively. "It is to be hoped we shall hear from him soon."

"That man Prawle looks like a person who won't bear fooling with," remarked the Sackville hotel man. "If he

should happen to tumble to the Chink's little game I should feel kinder sorry for Meen Fun. What do you think about it?"

"It will be his funeral, not ours," replied Clymer, carelessly.

"It will be ours, too, for in that case we shouldn't get the paper we want."

Clymer frowned, and then feeling that talking was dry work ordered drinks for himself and his friend.

Coffey mixed and brought the liquor, and he did not forget himself in the order.

He judged from the liberal disposition of Plunkett especially that his new acquaintances were well supplied with the needful, and he was anxious to relieve them—without actually putting his hand in their pockets—of as much of their wad as he could entice in his direction.

"Well, gents, here's hoping things are comin' your way," said Coffey, as the three touched glasses.

"They'll come our way all right if that Mongolian of yours brings back the paper we want," said Clymer, setting down his glass.

"He'll get it if the thing is to be found," replied Coffey, confidently. "I've seen many slick Chinamen in my time, gents, but Meen Fun can give 'em all cards and spades, and beat 'em out every time; take my word on it."

"I hope so; but I want you to understand that he isn't up against such an easy proposition. That prospector is a hard old nut to bamboozle, while two of those boys at least are as bright as you find them. If they catch your Chinaman up to any tricks it will go hard with him."

"They're welcome to handle Meen Fun as roughly as they please if they detect him; but that they'll never do."

"I'd like to feel as sure about it as you do," said Clymer, anxiously.

"One would think you gents had struck a lead down at the creek, you're so desperately in earnest to get your flukes on that claim," said Coffey, pointedly.

"It isn't that," replied Plunkett quickly; "we've another reason for wantin' to get hold of it."

"There must be somethin' worth findin' there," persisted Coffey, "or those chaps wouldn't go into camp on that spot. Looks rather suspicious to me. Instead of coming by the short route through the Gulch here you tell me they have gone around by water. It doesn't seem to me they would have done that if they didn't aim to keep their presence there a secret as long as possible. I think you gents will find it to your interest to let me in on this thing, or I may take it into my head to do a little investigating on my own hook. Beaver Creek ain't so far away but I could run down there in an hour or two, and there isn't any law against a man using his eyes, or askin' questions about matters that interest him."

Coffey's unexpected attitude disconcerted the two schemers. They had hoped to keep the existence of the copper deposit in the background.

Now they realized that they would have to let the saloonkeeper into the secret, and once they did that they did not doubt but he would demand an interest in the mine in return for his silence and co-operation.

"Well, gents, am I with you in this?" asked Coffey, with a significant look, regarding his two patrons complacently, as if he believed he had them in a tight place. "or——"

What he was going to add never transpired, for at that moment the little, wiry form of Meen Fun appeared at the entrance to the saloon, and then like a shadow glided up to the table where the three men sat, and dropped Gideon Prawle's pocketbook midway between them, a grin, child-like and bland, resting on his yellow countenance.

For a moment the group was taken by surprise, then three hands reached for the tempting object, and, as it happened, the saloonkeeper's fingers were undermost and closed firmly around the pocketbook.

"That belongs to us," said Clymer, eagerly. "By what right——"

"Don't lose your tempers, gents," said Coffey, coolly, reaching for his revolver with his disengaged right hand and whisking it out in a jiffy. "Let's come to an understandin' in this matter. Good things are not so plentiful 'round hereabouts that I'm lettin' one go by me when the chance offers. Come now, own up. What have you discovered at Beaver Creek?"

Both Clymer and Plunkett looked at him in sulky defiance.

"Take your hands off my fist, will you?" demanded Coffey, menacing them with his gun.

They obeyed the order with manifest reluctance.

The saloonkeeper drew the pocketbook toward him, but made no movement to open it.

"Well, since you won't open your mouths, I'll see if the Chinaman can't throw a little light on the subject. He's been there, and there isn't much that escapes his sharp eyes. I may as well tell you, gents, that I sent him to the creek as much on my own account as on yours. Did you fancy I was such a fool as not to see that there must be somethin' unusual in your eagerness to get hold of that claim? And I knew the other crowd wouldn't take the trouble to go and camp out in that wilderness unless somethin' was doin'. Now, Meen Fun, tell me what you saw down at the creek."

"Allee light."

Meen Fun then told his story of how he had reached Beaver Creek about sunrise that morning, how he thought he had fooled Prawle and the boys with his San Francisco yarn, and how he had asked for work.

"Me catchee job wheelee locks in ballow outee minee."

"Oh, ho; so there's a mine down there, is there?" laughed Coffey. "Is that your secrets, gents? Funny nobody around here knows anythin' about such a thing. What does it look like, Meen Fun?"

"Holee in lock."

"Looks like a hole in the rock, eh? Quartz or fine gold, you yaller heathen?"

"No goldee."

"What! No gold?"

The Celestial shook his head.

"Diggee plantee led locks outee minee. Putee samee in flatee boat."

"Digging red rocks and loading them on a flat-boat. What is the meaning of that, gents? What is this red rock? Is it copper ore?" a new light breaking in on his mind.

"Yes, it's copper ore," answered Clymer, sulkily, as the admission was reluctantly forced from him. "Now you know what we're after."

"You might have made a clean breast of that in the first place. Now, gents, are we pards in this mine?"

"I s'pose we are," growled Plunkett. "You've got us where the hair is short, and we've got to take you in whether we like it or not."

"Let us drink on it then, and drown all hard feelin'," said Coffey, making a sign to one of his employes.

The liquor was served, and the three having drained their glasses the Chinaman was dismissed, and Coffey, returning his gun to his pocket, opened the pocketbook.

"What we want, I think, gents, is the bill of sale of the Sanders claim, ain't it?"

Clymer and Plunkett nodded and looked eagerly at each bit of memoranda brought to light.

When the last paper had been exposed to their gaze and the pocketbook shook out, they sat back in their chairs and stared blankly at each other.

CHAPTER XIV.

PUT ON THEIR GUARD.

The saloonkeeper was the first to recover from the general disappointment.

"Well, gents, it appears the paper we expected to find in this pocketbook isn't here at all. What are we goin' to do about it?"

"The Chinaman has made a botch of the job," said Clymer, furiously.

Coffey didn't seem to take this view of the case.

"It's my opinion, gents, that fellow Prawle, as you call him, was just a little mite too smart for us. I'm afraid, seein' he knew you two were in a sweat over that claim, and might be expected to make some move after that document, that he went and deposited it in the bank at Trinity, where it naturally would be safe."

"If he's done that the game is up," said Plunkett, with a look of intense chagrin. "I might as well make tracks for Sackville right away."

"Pooh! Where's your sand?" said Coffey, who didn't wish to lose his new acquaintances while they had a dollar to spend on his premises. "Don't get discouraged all at once. There's more ways than one of killin' a cat."

"Well, you're one of us, now. What do you propose?" asked Clymer.

"How many are there in that party all told?"

"Four—Prawle and the three boys. One of them is a Dutch boy."

"You think the claim is valuable enough to fight for, do you?"

"I'm certain of it. Prawle, who ought to know, said the rock would turn out ninety per cent. copper."

"He said that; did he? Is he an expert?"

"I should judge he knows what he's talking about."

"I opine nobody hereabouts knows that party is at the creek but us three and the Chinaman. As soon as the fact leaks out, though, a good many of the boys will hustle down there to see what's goin' on. We must get ahead of 'em. Now, gents, what kind of a document did you make Jim Sanders sign here yesterday?"

"A duplicate bill of sale of his claim," said Clymer.

"When did he give the original bill of sale?"

"A week ago."

"Well, gents, I tell you what we'll do. You date that duplicate paper back, then we'll just go down to the creek and tell those chaps we bought the property first. Of course there'll be a kick. Then we'll sail in and clean 'em out. If somebody gets hurt it mustn't be us."

"Do you mean to kill the four of them?" asked Plunkett, not exactly relishing the scheme.

"It won't do to take any half measures, gents, for in that case the Vigilance Committee in the Gulch here would be bound to hear about the affair, and things would be made kind of unpleasant for us if the investigation went against us."

Neither Clymer nor Plunkett were in favor of such a radical move, especially in view of the probable consequences.

"Well, gents, if you've got a better plan to propose I'll listen to you," said the saloonkeeper.

The conference ended, however, without any definite plan being adopted by the trio of rascals.

At the creek the next morning the disappearance of Meen Fun was generally regarded as a suspicious circumstance.

Prawle did not immediately miss his jacket, and a close examination of their portable property failed to show that the Mongolian had carried off anything belonging to them.

When they began work again in the mine, Jack and Charlie took turns wheeling the loads of ore outside.

Occasionally one or the other of the boys sent Meyer inside to take his place for a spell with the pick and shovel, while he stayed out on the bank of the creek and took up the German lad's job.

Half-past eleven came around, and Meyer was glad to turn in and cook dinner.

On his way back from a near-by spring with a pail full of water he ran foul of Prawle's jacket where Meen Fun had cast it aside.

"Off dis don'd look exactly like Mr. Prawle's yackets I'm a liar," he muttered. "Vot a funny spots to hung it ub. Off I wanted to lose id, dese are der blaces I would leaf id. Maybe id don't peen any bizness off mine to took it back mit me, but all der same I done it yust for der fun off der t'ing."

When Meyer called the rest of the party to dinner he exhibited the jacket he had picked up.

"That's mine," said Gideon Prawle. "What are you doing with it, Meyer?"

"Vot I am doing mit id?"

"That's what I said," returned the prospector. "I left it hanging from a nail in my tent pole."

"Is do so-o?" replied the German boy. "You are sure off dor?"

"Certainly I am. I haven't worn it for a couple of days."

"Vere you s'pose I found dot yackets?"

"Where I left it, of course."

"Und you say you left id py a nail in der tent, ain't id?"

"Yes," said Prawle, growing tired of the argument.

"Vell, den. I found dot yackets on der bushes ub der road a liddle vholes ago. Vot you haf to said to dot?"

"On the bushes up the road!" exclaimed Prawle, in surprise.

"I guess you're dreaming, Meyer," said Jack with a laugh.

"Don'd talk foolishness."

Prawle thrust his hand into the various pockets of the garment in quick succession, but each time drew it out empty.

"Boys," he said at last, "my pocketbook is gone."

"What!" exclaimed Jack and Charlie in a breath.

"Off id vos gone den I ped you dot Shinamans dook id," said Meyer, positively.

"Was there anything important in it?" asked Jack, a bit anxiously.

"Nothing more than \$25 in bills."

"It's lucky you deposited that bill of sale in the bank at

Trinity," Charlie spoke up. "It would be kind of awkward to have lost that."

"Do you want to know what I think?" asked Prawle, reflectively.

"What?" queried Jack.

"Why, that that Chinaman was sent down here from Rocky Gulch by Clymer and his associate Plunkett on purpose to try and steal that bill of sale away from me."

"I shouldn't wonder if you are right," nodded Jack.

"If that's so, then they have got beautifully left," grinned Charlie.

"That's some comfort," agreed the prospector, beginning to eat his dinner.

"Whether it's so or not," said Jack, with a sagacious wag of the head, "I think we'd better keep a brighter lookout while we're here. No telling what piece of rascality those men may put up against us. The possession of this mine, of whose richness Clymer is assured, is temptation enough for scoundrels like them even to attempt our lives. I move we each stand watch so many hours every night."

"Second der motions," shouted Meyer, with his mouth full of food.

Jack's proposition being deemed a prudent one it was adopted.

CHAPTER XV.

STARTLING NEWS.

The development of the old deserted copper mine, which had been duly christened the Pandora, went on daily.

The vein or rather ledge of ore which Prawle had originally tapped penetrated right into the hill which formed the topographical outline of the Jim Sanders claim.

It furnished copper almost in a virgin state of richness, and every pound the boys took out was fully up to the quality of the original samples produced by the prospector in the little surgery at Sackville.

The boys were enthusiastic over the prospects in sight.

"No medical school for me this year," said Charlie, as he gleefully regarded a four-pound specimen of the pure ore which had fallen out of a fissure at his feet.

"I don't blame you for wanting to put it off a while under these circumstances," replied Jack. "It seems almost as if we were digging gold or silver, doesn't it, old chum?"

"It's a standing wonder to me that none of those chaps up at the Gulch ever took it into their heads to investigate this hole in the hill."

"That's right," said Jack, as he shoveled the loosened rock into one of the wheelbarrows. "Sanders tried to sell this claim a hundred times, but nobody wanted it. He was too lazy and shiftless to look into the place himself, and probably too ignorant of minerals to have noticed the composition of the rock here even had he done so."

"If his partner, who originally staked the ground, was acquainted with the value of his mine, as might strike you as likely, he failed to impart the secret to Sanders."

"It was a case of sudden death with him, so I fancy he didn't have time to make any statement."

"It is more than a week now since that Chinaman was down here," went on Charlie, after Jack returned from wheeling a load of the ore outside, "and Clymer and Plunkett haven't made any hostile demonstrations. I wonder what they're up to."

"I'd give something to know. Men of their stamp don't give up so easily when such a valuable stake as this is in sight."

"Maybe they've heard that we've made application for a United States patent on the property and have recognized the uselessness of following the game any further."

"Possibly," answered Jack; "but for my part I don't believe we've heard the last of those rascals."

"When is Prawle coming back, do you think?"

"Not for a week at least. He's gone as you know to make arrangements to have this load of ore towed up to Trinity."

"I know that all right."

"Then he's got to arrange with the railroad company for a car to take it to the Montana smelting works at Marysville, make terms with the smelting people, and also see about shipping the copper East."

"Where to?"

"Mr. Prawle didn't say, because he didn't know when talking to us about the matter. Probably New York."

"I thought it was to go to Chicago."

"The car will no doubt go by way of Chicago, and I shouldn't be surprised to learn if it is held there for a while

for exhibition purposes while the Pandora company is being promoted. That would be my idea, if I were running things. I'd have the newspaper men examine it. That would bring notices, and thus call general attention to the discovery of a new mine of uncommon richness."

"You've got a great head, Jack."

"Oh, I don't know; but I think I have a head for business. Taking it after my father. There's nothing like publicity when you want to exploit a good thing."

"Or a poor one, either. Look how those wildcat mining schemes are advertised. They catch lots of dupes every day."

"That's what they do. Well, it's your turn now to wheel that barrow outside."

Several days went by, and the boys began to have visitors from Rocky Gulch.

The mining operations at the creek had got abroad, and curiously disposed inhabitants of the Gulch came down to see what was going on.

Therefore, it wasn't long before every person at the mining camp above knew that a copper lode had been discovered at Beaver Creek, and there was a hustle among some of the less fortunate ones to take up claims in the immediate vicinity of the Pandora, in line with the direction in which it was presumed the vein of ore was running.

Several prospectors who had been over the ground before for indications of gold turned up again and began new experiments to locate the existence of the copper deposits beyond the property lines of the Pandora.

Everybody, of course, examined with the greatest interest the sample load of ore on board the flat-boat, and the favorable comment its richness excited only spurred the boys on to greater efforts.

At last the boat was as full as Mr. Prawle had deemed prudent to load it.

The boys now grew impatient at the prospector's continued absence.

"He's been gone a week over the time he calculated to be away," said Jack to Charlie, as they were eating supper one night after all labor in the mine had been discontinued. "I hope nothing has gone wrong."

"Why should anything have gone wrong?" propounded Charlie.

"I was thinking about Clymer and Plunkett. They left Rocky Gulch I heard about the same time Mr. Prawle went through the camp bound for Trinity."

"Maybe one of us, you for instance, ought to go up to Trinity and see if word can be heard from Mr. Prawle. You might telegraph to Marysville to the smelters."

"I'll go if you say so."

"I would. Meyer and I won't be lonesome around here now."

"All right. I'll go to-morrow morning. You may expect me back by night."

Hardly were the words out of his mouth before a horseman leading another animal dashed into the Pandora camp.

The boys hastened to meet him.

"Which of you is Jack Howard?" asked the stranger, who was a young, smoothly shaven fellow, with a town air about him.

"That's my name," said Jack, stepping up. "Are you from Trinity?"

"Yes. I've been sent by——"

"Mr. Prawle?"

"Yes. He wants to see you at once at the American House. I've brought a horse. You're to go back with me."

"I'm all ready to do so. You'll rest a while, won't you, before we start?"

"Not longer than's necessary to give my nag a rubbing down."

"Judging by the looks of your animal you must have traveled fast," said Jack, curiously.

"Well, yes," said the rider carelessly, leaping to the ground, and pulling out a cloth began to rub the mare's back and flanks.

"There's something up," said Charlie to his chum in a low tone.

"I'm afraid so," replied Jack, not quite easy in his mind.

"Dot's a fine horse you haf dere. I ped you," said Meyer to the newcomer.

"One of the best in this section."

"You wouldn't sold dot horse, would you, off you got a good price for him?"

"He's not mine to dispose of, young feller," was the curt reply.

"P'haps you toldt me, den, where I found me a goot horse for mineseluf?"

"You'll have no trouble finding a good horse in Trinity if you want one. Now, Howard, we'll be on the move," and he leaped on the back of his mare.

Jack followed suit on the led horse.

"By-by, Charlie. I'll bring the news back with me. Take good care of Meyer."

"I like me dot," snorted the German boy. "I dink I dook care off mineseluf."

"Is there anything wrong?" asked Jack, anxiously, as they dashed off out of camp.

"Well, yes; I didn't want to let on before the others, as you're the only one that's wanted. Prawle was shot about sundown and is not expected to live."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE DEATH OF GIDEON PRAWLE.

Gideon was stretched out upon a bed in one of the front rooms of the American House at Trinity.

The usually healthy, rugged look of his tanned face was now turned a ghastly white, which was rendered even more so by his heavy dark beard.

The proprietor of the hotel was sitting beside the bed fanning him when Jack, wild with anxious solicitude, was shown to his room.

He opened his eyes and smiled faintly when he recognized the boy.

"I'm afraid I'm a goner this time, Jack, he said, taking the lad's hand in his two weather-scarred ones.

"I hope not, sir," answered the boy with some agitation.

"The doctor was back to see me a few minutes ago, and he said I couldn't hold out over an hour more. Isn't that so, Mr. Price?" looking at the landlord.

Jack turned pale, and the tears started into his eyes as the proprietor of the house nodded solemnly.

"I'm hit in a vital spot, and the wound is bleeding internally," said the prospector with difficulty.

"Oh, Mr. Prawle!" said the boy in an agitated voice.

"Don't worry about me, my boy," continued the wounded man. "I've fixed everything with respect to the mine. I was afraid you wouldn't reach here before I petered out. You saved my life twice, lad, and I wanted to see you before the end came. Mr. Price drew up the papers which makes you the principal owner of the Pandora, and they're signed and witnessed in regular shape, so nobody can do you or your friends out of the claim. Three-fifths of the mine is now yours, the other parts I have allotted to Charlie Fox and young Meyer Dinkelspiel. I have chartered the steamer River Bird to tow the flat-boat to one of the wharves of this town. Mr. Price here will cart the stuff for you over to the freight house, where a car has been arranged for to take the ore to Marysville. The Montana Company will do the smelting and load it on a car for the East. I have not settled as to its ultimate destination; that will now be up to you. Lose no time in getting this first sample of the mine's productiveness on the market. As for the company itself I have no fear but you will be able to organize it without any damage to the interests of yourself and friends. Of course, you will be the president and the manager, and from what I have seen of your character I feel confident you are equal to the task of developing to its full extent the mineral wealth of the Pandora."

The foregoing was spoken with much difficulty and took time, for Gideon Prawle's strength was fast slipping away.

"But you have not told me how you came to be shot," asked Jack at length.

"Ever since I left Trinity two weeks ago I have been followed by three men."

"Three men!" exclaimed Jack. "Do you mean Otis Clymer and Dave Plunkett?"

"I do, and the third was a saloonkeeper of Rocky Gulch, named Coffey. They interviewed me first at Marysville, where they presented a paper which they claimed bore the signature of Jim Sanders, and they called my attention to the date, which they asserted gave them a prior claim on the mine. To avoid trouble, they said they were willing to compromise for a one-half interest in the Pandora. Of course I knew it was a scheme and refused to deal with them. A few nights afterwards they waylaid me on the street and tried to do me up, but I was quicker with my gun and Plunkett was carried off with a ball in his chest. After that I was constantly shadowed, and my delay in returning to camp is due to my efforts to avoid further trouble with Clymer and Coffey, both of whom swore to kill me on sight. I

am sorry to say that Coffey got me this afternoon in front of the hotel when I happened to be off my guard, and the best I could do after he had reached me was to put a ball in his arm. He and Clymer are in jail, and from what I know of Western justice Coffey will swing for drawing on me in cold blood. I didn't have a fair show, and there are a dozen witnesses to prove it."

This explanation had taxed the prospector's vitality to a great degree, and after that he spoke but little.

He died at ten o'clock that night, holding the boy's hand in his own to the last.

The death, unexpected as it was, of Gideon Prawle, was a sad shock to Jack Howard.

Jack sent a messenger after Charlie and Meyer, the messenger being directed to remain at the camp and watch over their interests at the creek.

Two days later all that was mortal of Gideon Prawle was laid to rest in the small cemetery on the green hillside back of the town of Trinity.

Then the boys, now directed by Jack as the responsible head of the mine's affairs, took up the threads of the arrangements engineered by Gideon Prawle, and proceeded to carry them to a successful conclusion.

The loaded flat-boat was duly towed up to Trinity and the ore loaded on a car provided by the railroad company.

That night the car started for the Marysville smelting establishment in the center of a long freight train.

Jack preceded it on an afternoon local, while Charlie and Meyer, with a couple of stout Trinity men, returned to their camp on the flat-boat to make up a second load of ore for shipment on the same lines as the first.

The same night also, by some unexplained means, Otis Clymer and his associate Coffey, made their escape from the Trinity jail, and all efforts of the authorities of the town failed to recapture them or discover a clue to the direction they had taken in their flight.

CHAPTER XVII.

A COPPER HARVEST.

Ten days after the death of Gideon Prawle Jack Howard stood in the freight yard of the Montana Central Railroad and watched car 999, with its way-bill, which contained specifications of the contents and destination of the car, attached in plain sight, being pushed into place at the tail end of an eastbound freight train then being made up to leave the yard at seven that evening.

While he was standing a little distance away between the tracks another long train, made up of empties, backed down and shut out from his view the particular train to which car 999 was attached.

It was some minutes before the empties passed down the line, but when they did Jack saw the man who had been pointed out to him as the conductor of the seven o'clock eastbound freight, in company with two other men, one of whom carried one of his arms in a sling, standing in front of car 999, talking earnestly.

"I never saw Coffey, the scoundrel who shot Mr. Prawle, and therefore cannot say if this fellow bears any resemblance to him," mused Jack; "but I do know he was hit in the arm by the prospector on that fatal occasion. As for the other, that may be Otis Clymer disguised—he's about the same height and build as the ex-drug clerk. Well, I must say I don't like the look of things. There may be nothing in it, but all the same they seem to be taking an uncommon interest in that car of mine. And that reminds me of the story Mr. Prawle told us one evening of the stealing of a car of copper ore in which a friend of his was interested. The rascals painted out the number of the car and shunted it off on a branch line where another car was due. Then when the car was found again it was empty, and, of course, nobody knew what had become of the stuff that was in it. It had just disappeared mysteriously. Such a thing could only be accomplished by bribing the conductor of the freight. I would not like to have such a game played off on me."

At this point in the boy's reflections the conductor received a small package from one of the men, which he immediately dropped into his pocket, and then the three walked slowly down the track.

Jack immediately dashed around to the other side of the line of loaded freight cars and ran down the track till he had caught up with the trio who were walking on the other side of the train.

He kept pace with them until he reached the front car

and then stood in its shadow in order to get a closer observation of the three men, in two of whom he now felt a great interest.

"You won't fail us, then, Dorgan?" said the man in the heavy beard, whose tones had such a familiar ring to Jack that he instinctively muttered, "That is Otis Clymer sure enough, therefore there is no doubt whatever in my mind but that the wounded man is Coffey. Evidently there is some mischief on foot."

And this fact was made certain to the boy when the conductor replied:

"You may rely on me. I'll have the car of copper shunted off at Benson's Crossing. You had better have your teams on hand as soon after midnight as possible, for we're due there at 11.55 p. m. I'll see to it that the number of the car is altered to 900, which is the number of an empty I've got to leave at the crossing."

"All right," said Coffey, "we're going down on the eight o'clock passenger which stops at Phalanx, a mile this side of Benson's."

The two schemers then crossed over to the end of the freight sheds and disappeared.

Jack Howard hoofed it in short order to the office of the division superintendent and had an interview with that official.

That gentleman was incredulous at first.

But Jack succeeded in convincing him that there really was a piece of villainy on foot, and the superintendent, after considering the matter, agreed to fall in with the plan proposed by the boy to defeat it.

At a few minutes after ten that night the eastbound passenger stopped as per schedule at Phalanx.

The only passengers to alight on the platform were the disguised Clymer and his companion in iniquity, Coffey.

On the other side, however, Jack Howard, the division superintendent, and three officers of the Marysville police force, stepped off into the darkness and started at once through the gloom for Benson's, where they duly arrived and concealed themselves close to the siding.

At 11.55 the whistle of the eastbound freight was heard a short distance down the line.

Two minutes later the freight slowed up and stopped at the crossing, and then the car next to the caboose, which bore the number 900, was shunted on to the siding.

Then the train went on.

Ten minutes later several teams appeared, and one of them was backed up against the freight car.

Several men provided with shovels came up, and under the direction of the two villains, whom Jack pointed out to the officers, started in to unload the car.

That, however, was as far as they got.

Half an hour later the night express was signaled at Phalanx, and when it came to a stop it was boarded by the superintendent, Jack Howard and the two Marysville officers in charge of the handcuffed Otis Clymer and the saloon-keeper, Coffey.

Coffey was afterward taken back to Trinity to stand trial for the murder of Gideon Prawle, and eventually was convicted and executed for the crime.

As for Clymer he was taken back to Sackville on a requisition from the Governor of Nebraska; was tried on the double indictment of attempted murder and arson, and received a sentence of twenty years in the State prison.

Jack Howard went on to New York, disposed of the carload of copper, which arrived safely, interested a few capitalists in his copper mine, formed the Pandora Company in accordance with the laws of the State of New York, had himself elected president and manager, with Meyer Dinkelspiel for his assistant, while Charlie Fox was elected secretary, and then returned to the scene of operations in Montana.

That the Pandora copper mine proved a winner and that Jack Howard eventually became a millionaire, with Charlie Fox and Meyer Dinkelspiel rated at least half as much each, is a proven fact, for put into operation under modern methods the mine turned out ore so fast and so rich that the newspapers of the day always alluded to it as "A Copper Harvest."

Next week's issue will contain "FROM A CENT TO A FORTUNE; OR, A CHICAGO BOY'S GREAT SCOOP."

SEND POSTAL FOR OUR FREE CATALOGUE.

CURRENT NEWS

Richard Thomas and August Knies, miners, cast their minnow nets into the Okaw River, just north of Carlyle, Ill., and hauled in a half dozen clams. Thomas broke open the shells and was about to toss a mussel into a frying pan when his fingers felt the largest gem, perhaps, ever seen in St. Louis. They made the rounds of the St. Louis jewelry shops and were informed they had found "a pearl of great price." They are holding it for \$2,000.

United States troops may be sent to China to guard the Peking-Tientsin Railway line, and the War Department has ordered Major-General Thomas Barry, in command of the Department of the Philippines, to investigate the situation. The railway line has been under a guard composed of detachments from the legationary forces of the several powers represented in China, the guardianship being an outgrowth of the late Boxer rebellion. The withdrawal of the soldiers of the nations now at war places the burden of protecting the line on the United States.

For use in one of its depots for explosives, the British government has had a fireless locomotive built. It has a reservoir partly filled with water and is charged with high-pressure steam from a boiler placed outside the danger zone. It can work on one charge of the reservoir for several hours of continuous hauling or for a much longer time on ordinary shunting work. It can stand for twelve hours in the open air with only slight loss of steam and can run back to the charging station under a pressure of only fifteen pounds to the square inch.

One woman's work over a washboard was responsible for the erection of the recently completed Union Holiness Mission, Junction City, Kan. The woman is Mrs. Annie Petty, colored. The congregation, of which Mrs. Petty is a member, had been meeting in a rented hall, and she decided that the congregation should have a church of its own. Mrs. Petty started to work toward this end. She earned enough money to purchase a lot, and since that time has contributed largely to the erection of the recently finished building. Mrs. Petty is well up in years, but washed every day in order to get the church started.

Official sanction to hold a 900-mile Panama-California Exposition road race from El Paso, Texas, to San Diego, Cal., has been received from the American Automobile Association and it is planned to hold the race some time during January or February of next year. Word also has been received from El Paso that the Texans will cooperate to make the race a success and the San Diego Automobile Racing Association will begin at once to make arrangements for the contest. The racers will follow the course of the southern national highway, finishing on the grounds of the Panama-California Exposition, which will open Jan. 1. A purse of at least \$10,000 has been guaranteed.

Artificer Luickhardt of a Zeppelin airship crew has been decorated with the Iron Cross, first class. While the Zeppelin was dropping bombs on Antwerp recently it was detected by a searchlight in the town and a battery showered shells around it. One of the shells shattered the framework of a propeller, the damage threatening to entirely disable the airship. Luickhardt, when he realized this danger, volunteered to saw off the propeller, which task he accomplished in half an hour while clinging to the shattered framework 6,000 feet above the guns of the fortress. Later when the dirigible got under way and was speeding at the rate of forty miles an hour, Luickhardt repaired a long rent made in her hull by a shell.

Jerusalem's 100,000 inhabitants are starving as the result of the war, said Samuel Edelman, United States consul in Jerusalem, who returned here recently aboard the Italian liner Ancona. "For many years Jerusalem has depended for its income on money spent there by tourists and from charity, and the war has cut off this source of revenue," Edelman said. "There are no industries and little cultivation of the soil in surrounding territory, and suffering will be intense in the coming rainy season unless relief comes." Edelman said the \$40,000 recently forwarded the city by Jacob H. Schiff was helpful, but more was required to avert famine. Raimondo Diego, a stow-away from Almeria, Spain, will start back there when the Ancona sails. As the ship will not touch at Almeria, he must go to Genoa. If the Italian authorities refuse to allow him to land he must be kept aboard until the Ancona touches at his native port, which may not be for several trips.

Tests have been made recently in the Mediterranean of the hydroscope invented by the Italian, Guiseppe Pino, an engineer of Milan. A volume of water of over sixteen thousand square yards of surface at the bottom of the sea was so brilliantly illuminated that everything could be distinctly seen. As the instrument used was small and inexpensive, it is evident that still more wonderful results might be achieved. Not only will botany, geology and zoology be greatly enriched, but the mineralogy of the ocean is henceforth open to scientists. The hydroscope may even render useless torpedo boats and mines, as, should the captain of a cruiser see the submarine prowler or projectile, he could destroy it before any damage was done. In navigation the instrument should also be serviceable, as rocks and sandbanks will be clearly seen, the cause and extent of many disasters ascertained, and sunken vessels examined. The coral, the sponge and the pearl oyster will be more fully available. All over the world a very large number of ships sink, with their treasure, every month, and the salvage of these, as well as the immense wealth lost by the wreck of vessels long ago, should prove a rich harvest for those who adopt the invention of the Italian engineer.

THE GALLANT TROOPER

— OR —

FIGHTING FOR UNCLE SAM

By GASTON GARNE

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER V.

UNDERHAND WORK.

"This must be investigated, and at once," Captain Noble said, sternly, his face very white. "It is the most outrageous thing I ever heard of. I will go myself and look after the wires. It was certainly an attempt upon your life, Vivian, and if we find the guilty one he shall be shown no mercy."

The story was soon bandied about from one to another, and in the excitement the boat race was forgotten. That handsome Vivian Merle's life should have been attempted was something to be talked of for the next week. Who could be his enemy, or enemies? people asked each other. He was liked by all who knew him, and they could not understand it.

Captain Noble went to the spot on the bank opposite the point where the single shells had started from, and sure enough there were the wires just as Vivian had said. It was very cunningly arranged, and whoever had invented it must have hated Vivian Merle with a deep and bitter hatred. Captain Noble's face paled beneath its coat of bronze, and he shook his head.

"Who could have done such a dastardly deed?" he asked himself, in bewilderment. "Surely Vivian has no enemies among the boys at the academy, and I do not believe there is a boy who could invent such an infamous thing. I do not think that Manuel de Garcia really likes him, but it is only because he is a trifle jealous. Still he is not villain enough to do anything like this."

Thus the great boat race ended. It was not such an ending as the boys from the academy anticipated, but they were thankful that their beloved captain's life had been spared.

Captain Noble was very grave during the remainder of the day, and that night at supper he scarcely said a word. In spite of the fact that he had been half drowned, Vivian was present at the meal, but he ate very little.

Manuel de Garcia watched him closely, and Captain Noble in turn watched the Cuban. While he did not in any way connect him with the occurrence of the day, yet he did not really trust him, and he determined to see what was going on.

After the evening meal was over, and the boys were safe in their own rooms getting ready for the evening's entertainment, the last of the week, Captain Noble sat alone in his private study lost in thought. His kindly face was

very grave, and the deep dent between his eyebrows told plainly that he was in anything but a pleasant frame of mind.

"It is the most unpleasant thing in the world to have anything like this happen," he murmured; "and I cannot imagine who would be guilty of such a thing. I am glad that the year is nearly ended, for I confess that I am in no mood to go on with teaching. I need a rest."

He little dreamed as he sat there, the soft moonlight streaming in through the open window, that he was destined to have no rest that summer, nor for many a day to come. The storm-cloud hovering over his head as well as over many others, had not yet burst, so how was he to know?

Suddenly his eyes rested upon a small, square, white envelope lying on the small stand near him, and stretching out his hand, he picked it up, wondering in a mechanical, idle sort of way, whom it could be from. It must be an invitation out somewhere, he thought.

He broke the seal, and drawing nearer the shaded lamp that burned dimly upon the table, glanced at the lines written in a stiff, cramped hand, writing that he was unfamiliar with, and as he read on his expression of perplexity deepened.

"What is the meaning of *this*?" he muttered, brushing his hair back with a quick, nervous movement. "I do not understand it. Evidently Vivian Merle has an enemy, and a bitter one at that, for I cannot believe anything against the boy."

Once more he took the letter in his hands, and by the faint, flickering light read the words that loomed up, black and irregular against the white background of the paper:

"CAPTAIN NOBLE—It will be to your own interest, and also that of your school, if you would keep your eyes on the young man known as Vivian Merle. As an old and respected citizen of Lake Forest, I deem it my duty to warn you. It is not a very good example he sets to the younger pupils of the academy, that of having Manhattan cocktails and intoxicating liquors in his room. Unless such goings on are stopped I shall withdraw my boys from the school.
A CITIZEN."

A frown black as midnight settled over Captain Noble's brow and he crushed the letter impatiently in his hand.

"Why can't people attend to their own affairs?" he muttered. "The idea of sending me such a letter. I suppose, however, it is from some old crank who thinks the world was created especially for his benefit. Or else it was

written by some one who is determined to injure him. Well, I'll speak to the boy and tell him he must stop it—that is, he must keep his cocktails out of sight, providing he has them in his room. I will go now before the exercises begin to-night."

Vivian standing before the table, adjusting his white tie with fingers that trembled in spite of himself, for he was weak and nervous from his unexpected ducking in the lake, was surprised to hear a gentle tap upon his door, and to his "come in," entered Captain Noble. He was surprised, for he could not imagine what brought the principal there at that time.

"Good-evening, my boy. I am glad to see that you are able to take part to-night," he said, kindly. "I was afraid you would not feel equal to it after the experience you had to-day."

Vivian laughed.

"Surely, Captain Noble, you do not think I would stay in bed for a week because of a tumble in the lake?" he said, turning around to look at him. "It takes considerable more than a little cold water to hurt me. But all the same it was a contemptible, cowardly trick, and I would give ten years of my life to find the one or the ones who did it."

"We shall find them in time never fear," Captain Noble answered. "For guilt is never successful in hiding itself from the world entirely. Sooner or later it must come to light. By the way, Vivian, have you any cocktails in your room?" he asked hastily, and in a tone that said he was ashamed of himself for asking the question.

"Why certainly, Captain Noble," Vivian replied frankly. "I always keep them on hand for medicinal purposes. The doctor who treated me when I was ill a year ago, said they were better than plain brandy and they are certainly pleasanter. Will you have one? Help yourself," pushing the silver-mounted, cut-glass decanter toward him. "Here, though, wait until I get you a glass. I flatter myself that you will find them first-class. Just wait a minute, captain, I have some of the finest cherries that you ever saw, and a cocktail is not a cocktail without a cherry. There, now, don't that make a great improvement?"

As he spoke, he opened the glass door of a cabinet that hung on the wall, and taking out a rather small, wide-necked bottle half full of cherries, handed it to the principal.

"Ah, Vivian, my boy, it is plain to be seen that you have the making of a soldier in you," Captain Noble responded, shaking his head gravely, yet at the same time smiling; "and since you offer me a cocktail, I cannot be so rude as to refuse it. But, my boy, beware of them. Don't let them get the upper hand of you. Keep them as a necessity, a sort of bracer as it were, and always be master. Too much of a good thing may prove your ruin, you know, but so long as you keep them in check, and let no one be the wiser—well, 'tis your own business. Here's to you, and may you live to become a famous man distinguished in war, happy in love."

As he spoke, Captain Noble raised the slender stemmed goblet to his lips and drained it at a single draught. And Vivian, all unconscious of his errand, drank one with him; and thus was Manuel de Garcia's letter of warning heeded,

for it was he who had penned the lines intended to disgrace Vivian. And later on when he saw the principal and the boy he hated walking arm in arm through the chapel, his rage knew no bounds.

CHAPTER VI.

EXPELLED.

It was the last night of commencement week at the academy, and Diana Le Grand alone in her bare, cheerless room, sitting by the open window, could hear the music plainly. She knew all the other girls were there, and she felt as if she would like to do something awful to Miss Rebecca Skelton.

"The wretched old cat!" she muttered. "I had to lose the boat race of course, but then Ethel told me all about it in the note that Aunt Victory managed to bring up to me last night. Bless her good old heart, if it were not for her I would surely starve to death. And my heart almost stopped beating when I read that Vivian Merle came near drowning. And to think that Clarence Kendal should swim out and save him. I feel like hugging the fellow!"

At that moment the strains of a familiar waltz floated to her ears, borne on the night wind. It was more than Diana could stand. She arose from her seat, her eyes flashing, her lips compressed.

"I am going to dress myself and go out," she said recklessly. "I don't care if I am expelled for it to-morrow, I will have a breath of fresh air."

In a few moments she had donned the best dress she had, a simple white muslin, and throwing a light, fleecy shawl about her shoulders, she slipped down-stairs, and into the basement, where Aunt Victory, the colored cook, was busy setting things to rights for the next morning. She looked up from her task as she heard the sound of the girl's light footsteps on the floor.

"Good Lawd, honey chile! Whuter doing heah? If de missus finds out dat yer lef' yer room, she raise de debbil shuah. Lawd bless me, chile, but you's looking mighty peart like? S'pees yer gwine ter see yer beau, honey?"

The fat, good-natured negress laughed, for Diana was her special favorite, and but for her the girl would have fared poorly many a time, for Miss Rebecca Skelton kept a very close hand on the larder.

"I am going out where I can hear the music, and get a breath of fresh air, Aunt Victory," Diana answered. "Of course I shall not go near the academy, for she would be sure to see me, and, Aunt Victory, if she asks you about my being out of my room you will not tell on me?"

"Git away dar, chile, whut yer tink de ole woman's made of ennyhow?" Aunt Victory replied, with a show of indignation; "yer mus' be mighty neah outen yer head ter ask me sich a ting. An', honey, yer bettah be keerful, kase she's in a mighty bad tantrum. If she find yer gone—good Lawd! whuter time there'll be, shuah."

"Never fear, Aunt Victory, she will not see me, and she will never be any wiser about my going out to-night. If she does," with a sharp, bitter laugh, "it will not matter much."

(To be continued)

FACTS WORTH READING

TREASURE TAKEN FROM CARPATHIA STRONG BOX.

News of a \$15,000 robbery, which has puzzled the police of Naples and officers of the liner Carpathia, became known in New York the other day when the Cunard steamship arrived from the Italian port.

Two hours before the Carpathia left Naples for her westward trip an Italian boy who started down the steerage gangway with a can in his arms was stopped by a pier official. The boy said he was going ashore for water. A search revealed \$15,000 in American bank notes in the can.

After an unavailing search among the passengers for the owner of the money, the police locked up the boy, who had refused to tell where he got the \$15,000.

Another quest for the robbery victim was made aboard the Carpathia when she was six hours out, after the Naples police had insisted by wireless that some passenger must have been robbed, but the search disclosed nothing.

Where the bills came from was learned next day, when Chief Officer Stafford, examining a forward compartment in the hold, found that an express company's strong box had been broken into and only \$5,000 left of the \$20,000 originally sealed in the box. No clue as to the boy's confederate was obtained.

WILDCAT KILLED IN JERSEY.

Wildcats were long ago supposed to have become extinct in New Jersey, but hunters who go into the dense woods in the lower end of the State will keep a weather eye open for the beasts as the result of an attack made upon a hunter in Atlantic County recently.

Thomas Campbell, a young hunter of Pitman, Gloucester County, was out in the deer woods near May's Landing with a companion named Geiss looking for deer tracks. A gaunt, tawny animal suddenly leaped upon Geiss while they were following a deer run. The startled hunter swung his fists wildly at the beast and a lucky blow struck it on the head and knocked it to earth. Neither of the men was armed, but Campbell grabbed a club and struck down the beast before it could renew the attack. Both men then trampled it to death.

Campbell brought the carcass out of the woods as a proof of the hunters' exciting experience. An examination showed the animal to be a fine specimen of a nearly full-grown wildcat. The beast is supposed to have become hungry, which caused it to attack the men. Hunters fear that the parent beasts may be roaming somewhere about the deer woods and perhaps other young. This is the first wildcat killed in lower Jersey for many years.

VAST POWER IN SAND.

More than thirty years ago M. Beaudemoulin, a French savant, proved by experiment that a quantity of dry sand, placed in a box of thin sheet iron, or even in a canvas bag, and subjected to a slight compression, forms a mass capable of resisting a pressure of sixty tons, without breaking

or even straining the envelope. The sand, however, remains perfectly divisible, so that if a small hole be made in the box or bag, it will flow slowly, and with so little force that even a small piece of paper pasted over the opening will check the flow, even with the sixty tons weight upon it. M. Beaudemoulin thought this discovery might be utilized for building purposes, since the filled boxes needed merely to be held in place by a framework; while being very thick, they would form a protection for dwellings against variations of temperature. Such walls, moreover, would be fireproof. He also suggested that for lowering heavy buildings, or even entire blocks, which, through a change of street levels, had been left too high above the roadway, the sand-bags could be placed beneath and their contents allowed gradually to escape, thus letting the load slowly settle down. We have no knowledge of any practical application of this seemingly great discovery.

POTTAWATOMIE INDIAN SUPPORTS HIMSELF PICKING HUCKLEBERRIES.

The sole occupation of Edward Kak-Kak, a Pottawatomie Indian, who has passed the century mark, is picking huckleberries in the marshes about Dowagiac, Mich. Just as soon as the berries begin turning blue in the early part of July the old Indian comes from his home near Paw Paw and begins picking them. Each night he comes to town and sells his day's picking.

This is Kak-Kak's only occupation. It furnishes his only revenue, but every September he is able to return to his home near Paw Paw with sufficient money to keep him over the winter and into the next summer.

The old Indian lives all alone and his needs are not many. The oldest residents about Dowagiac say that as far back as they can remember Kak-Kak each summer came to Dowagiac to pick huckleberries. Years ago he was accompanied by members of his family, but now he comes alone. He has outlived his own people and most of the members of his tribe.

His hair, formerly black and straight, is now white. Kak-Kak never rides on trains. He walks miles and miles tramping through the marshes each day. At night, when others are wearied with their day's work in the marshes, Kak-Kak tramps off to town alone with his heavy baskets. When the time comes for him to return to Paw Paw he walks all the way, a distance of nearly twenty miles, to his home.

Kak-Kak claims that he is one of the few of the older Indians who were born in real log houses. He says that his family in the early days settled down to till the soil and that they welcomed the coming of the white man to Michigan. He believes that some day the government is going to pay members of the Pottawatomie band for the Chicago lake front, taken from the Indians by treaty nearly one hundred years ago.

The Fight for the Pirate's Isle

— OR —

CAPTAIN DIABLO'S LAST CRUISE

By ED. KING

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER XVI (continued)

With a dying malediction on their lips, they fell back into the water.

"Ha, ha!" laughed the Sea Demon, "the sharks will have a good feast to-day. See," he added, "they're already at work."

The horrible monsters were busily devouring their prey, dyeing the sea red with the blood of their victims.

The waves ran high, but the two boats weathered the storm and made for some comparatively smooth water which seemed to afford a landing place.

The brig was almost deserted.

Dick Decker still stood near the wheel.

Looking forward, he saw but two men on the deck.

It was too late to save the brig.

In a few moments she would crash against the rocks.

The Albatross, seeing the fate of the other vessel, had stood off from the island.

So there was no help to be obtained from her.

Nothing was left for Dick Decker but to make a jump as the ship struck, and endeavor to reach land.

He wanted to get into the bow of the brig, but had his doubts as to the intentions of the two men who were standing in the waist.

Dick Decker stepped forward.

"My men," he said, "I've no intention of feeding the sharks if I can help it. I must ask you to let me pass."

"Right, cap'n, we're with you."

Dick Decker was surprised.

The men did not speak as if they belonged to the pirate band.

"Who are you?" he asked, sharply.

"Two sailors from the Nantucket, pressed by the Demon to serve him!" was the reply.

This was an unlooked-for discovery.

"My men, I'm sorry if my act sends you to the bottom, but I hoped to end this scoundrel's career."

"Ay, ay, sir," said one man, "don't mention it. I'd cheerfully have gone to the bottom if I could have taken the black villain with me."

"Anyway," said the other sailor, "half the cut-throats won't draw their rations again."

"Stand in the bows," yelled Dick Decker. "As the ship strikes, jump; it's our only chance."

Driven by the fierce wind the brig was rapidly rushing towards a high ledge of rock against which the deep water

hurled itself in impotent rage. The white, feathery foam flew in clouds of spray almost blinding the three men.

"Now," shouted the Boy Commander, in a voice which rang high and clear above the storm.

Together the three men sprang at the rocky ledge.

As they did so, with a crash like thunder, the brig hurled itself against the adamant surface.

The timbers of the vessel cracked like twigs.

Down with a crash came the foremast and sails.

Back from the immovable obstacle reeled the gallant ship.

Then again it was carried by the waves and wind with fury against the rocks.

The water rushed in over the ship's sides and through the terrible rent made by the collision.

Soon all was over.

The Rattlesnake had made its last voyage.

The waves rolled over the spot where a moment before it had ridden majestically on the storm-tossed waters.

The top of the mainmast and a few floating spars were now all that marked its existence.

CHAPTER XVII.

ON THE ISLAND.

Dick Decker had managed to spring onto the rocky ledge.

So had the seaman who was next to him, standing on the bowsprit.

The other unfortunate man sprang at the same time, but his foot became slightly entangled in a rope that hung loosely.

He failed to land, and with a despairing cry, dropped into the seething mass of foaming water below.

The angry waves threw him against the rocks, and in a moment his lifeless body, crushed and bleeding, floated on the stormy sea.

Up out of reach of the waves crawled the two survivors. Then from a place of safety they sat and looked at the scene of the wreck and took stock of their position.

"A narrow escape—a precious narrow escape, cap'n," said the sailor.

"Yes," was all that Dick Decker replied.

Then after a pause he said:

"What's your name?"

"Jim Miller."

"Well, Jim Miller," said the Boy Commander, "it was a mighty hard matter to land here, but it'll be a much harder matter to get away."

"Right you are, cap'n. However, it don't do any good to get the blues. I've had some very close calls in my time and I'm still alive."

"Guess we'll make ourselves as happy, Jim, as things will allow."

"Wonder what's become of old Diablo?"

"Yes, I wonder. Maybe he's landed on this island. If so bad luck to us."

"Why?"

"He'll have a good search, take my word."

"Not he, cap'n. He'll reckon we're all at the bottom of the sea."

"Anyway, I won't take any chances. We must be very cautious."

Dick Decker stood up and looked around.

He saw not a sign of either of the boats, but that was easily explained. For a long ridge of high rocks jutting out effectually obstructed the view.

"The scoundrels are behind there," said Dick Decker.

"Think so?"

"Yes, and we'll lay low."

Nothing was to be seen of the Albatross.

Evidently she was keeping away from this treacherous coast.

The heat of the sun was intense, and where the two men sat there was no shelter from its rays.

"I can't stand this," said Dick Decker. "I didn't escape from the water to die by fire. By Jove, if we stay here we'll be broiled alive!"

Regardless of any risk they ran, the two men set off to explore the island on which they found themselves.

Soon they came to a clump of cocoanut trees.

The shade given by them was not much, but it was grateful.

Resting here only a short time, on the two men went.

On a rising hillock they saw a thick grove of trees.

Plunging right into the midst, the two men lay on the ground and, exhausted by the strain they had undergone, were soon asleep.

When Dick Decker woke, the setting sun showed him it was evening.

Quickly he roused Jim Miller.

"Here, wake up! We've been asleep all day."

The sailor sprang to his feet with a startled air.

Dick Decker laughed.

"D'you think I'm going to kill you?"

"Shiver me! No, cap'n, but for a moment or two I guess I didn't grasp the situation. Gosh! I'm mighty dry and hungry. Wouldn't I give a few dollars for a drink of rum?"

"I'd rather have a long drink of water. I'm parched."

However, there was no danger of starving.

For bananas grew in profusion, and there was plenty of cocoanuts, if they could be reached.

They helped themselves liberally to the bananas, which were remarkably luscious.

The quick ears of the sailor detected a curious sound.

"Water!" he cried.

"Where?"

"Don't know, but guess I soon will."

Crawling along with his ear to the ground, at length he located it.

The tiny stream was trickling down a rock, thickly hidden by the overhanging bushes.

In a few minutes the thirsty men had drunk their fill.

It was now getting quite dark.

Dick and Jim Miller decided not to pass the night in the grove of trees.

The noises that they heard were too suggestive of snakes.

So off they started for the open country again.

In the darkness they had not the remotest idea where they were going.

So afraid of falling over some precipice, perhaps into the ocean below, they took especial care.

Suddenly Jim Miller clutched Dick Decker by the arm.

"See!" he said in a whisper.

"What?"

"Look yonder!"

Then through the trees the two men saw flames arising from a fire.

"Captain Diablo," said Dick Decker.

"Not a doubt of it. That's the scoundrel and his gang."

"Jim, we must be cautious."

"You bet. Good-by to us if he gets his fingers on us."

"I guess we'll have a look."

"Better not."

"Why?"

"Well, don't you think it safer to keep as far away from them as we can?"

"Perhaps, still I mean to see what they're up to. Besides I'd rather like to know how many of them there are. It's quite possible that both boats didn't land."

"Very well, if you're determined to go I'm with you."

As they got nearer they could see the fire more distinctly.

It was evident from its position that the two men were traversing ground that lay at a higher elevation than that where the pirates were encamped.

Now they were arriving quite close.

They redoubled their caution.

Crawling along on their hands and knees through the coarse grass that grew on the island, they made no sound.

Soon they arrived at a ledge of rock that overhung the place where Captain Diablo was.

The high grass in which they were laying effectually concealed them from view.

Dick Decker pulled the thick growth aside and stealthily looked down.

Below they saw distinctly the whole scene.

The blazing fire lit up the little dell in which the pirates had made a retreat.

Around the fire were seated or lying about fifteen determined and ferocious looking men.

Captain Diablo and Ruiz were amongst them.

The majority of the men appeared to be asleep.

But the Sea Demon was as wide awake as ever.

(To be continued)

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A curious method of identifying soldiers who are not supplied with uniforms has been adopted by the Turkish government, it was said recently by Joseph Haddett, who returned on the steamship San Giorgio. "The army in Syria is being recruited to its fullest capacity," said Haddett. "There is a shortage of uniforms, but the soldiers are marked by having attached to their sleeves a band bearing the Turkish coat of arms. To remove this arm band is equivalent to desertion, and the offender is likely to face a firing squad."

Paper gloves and stockings are now being manufactured in Europe. As to the manner in which the former are made little is known, but the stockings have been carefully examined by experts, and they are loud in their praise of them. Let no one assume, they say, that these stockings, because they are made of paper, will only last a few days, for they will really last almost as long as ordinary stockings. The reason, they point out, is because the paper of which they are made was during the process of manufacture transferred into a substance closely resembling wool, and was then woven and otherwise treated as ordinary wool.

"Aunt Polly" Davis could live in a villa at Newport if she wanted to—she has \$33,000 in the bank and her 1,000-acre farm, near Quicksand, Ky., rich in coal and timber, is worth a fortune. If society appealed to her she could

be giving tango teas and lawn fetes instead of feeding chickens and hoeing corn. But the world wasn't very kind to "Aunt Polly." It broke her heart and wrecked her life. So now, at eighty-two, she lives alone in a desolate little cabin, with no companions but her chickens. The tragedy of her life is a sealed book. No one knows why she shuns the world and keeps on making money which she never spends. Despite her age she is in good health, and, with occasional help from a "hired hand," she takes care of her farm and raises her chickens.

Firmin Cassignol was in rare billiard form the other afternoon when he defeated J. D. Brown, a Canadian amateur, in an 18.2 balk line game at Slosson's Academy by 500 points to 28. The French billiardist ran out his 500 points in four innings, finishing up with an unfinished run of 341. In the first inning he got 38 to Brown's 16, and in the second ran off 60 caroms, while the Canadian was drawing a cipher. In the third inning he ran off 61 to Brown's 12, and in the next finished up his string by getting 341 by an exhibition of masterly billiards. This gave the Frenchman an average of 125. Cassignol only recently arrived in this country and is planning on playing a series of matches with George Slosson. The Frenchman made a favorable impression on billiard enthusiasts when he played in a tournament here several years ago. He is considered the best billiard player on the other side and is anxious to meet Willie Hoppe.

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GOOD CURRENT NEWS ARTICLES

Fifteen tons of dead fish taken from a lake at Junction City, Kan., were hauled to an adjoining field and used as fertilizer. This is probably the first time in history that fish were used in such a novel manner. The fish in several lakes here were killed in a mysterious way, and their death is puzzling the State game warden.

Twelve years ago Charles Miller, deputy State fire marshal of Columbus, Ohio, while fishing at Lakeview, near Lima, lost a \$20 diamond-studded ring. He has recovered the ring in a local jewelry store. Floyd Walters, of Lakeview, while fishing, brought up the ring and, finding Mr. Miller's name engraved inside, turned it over to a jeweler for safekeeping. Mr. Miller identified the ring.

Wladek Zbyszko, the Polish wrestler, is out with a challenge to Frank Gotch, the present holder of the wrestling championship, through his manager, L. Kowalski. The challenger is willing to post a \$1,000 forfeit to bind the match. Gotch, while he is the holder of the title, has not made his appearance on the mat in some time, and Zbyszko believes he should either defend his championship or retire.

David Yinglin of Cumberland township, residing near Natural Dam, Pa., while driving along a road in that vicinity, was startled to see a large bald eagle swooping down toward him. The bird pounced upon Mr. Yinglin, lighting on his leg, and began tearing his flesh with its claws and making the attack more severe by piercing him with its beak. After fighting the eagle, he managed to get it under his feet, and with forceful stamping crushed the life out of his adversary.

Michael Angeli McGinnis, famous convict mathematician, who was born in Greenville, Wis., is dead in a Kansas City hospital, according to reports just received. Mr. McGinnis' ability at figures gained him an international reputation. While in the Missouri penitentiary at Jefferson City, where he was sent after his conviction for misuse of the mails when publishing a newspaper in Newton County, McGinnis wrote a book on algebra which attracted the attention of educators all over the world.

Dum-dum bullets take their name from the town of Dum-Dum in British India, where a British arsenal is located. Hollow-nosed bullets were early manufactured at the Dum-Dum foundry for the use of the British forces against Afghans and other wild native tribes. The usual type of bullet failed to stop the mad charges of fanatical tribesmen and so the British saw fit to employ these terrible missiles against the savages. The Boers made strenuous complaint that the British were employing these bullets against them in the war of 1899. This the British have always denied, and in turn insisted that soft-nosed bullets were used by the Boers. To a certain extent the Boers used sporting ammunition and many sporting bullets are of the soft-nosed type. The Japanese charged that the Russians used dum-dum bullets in 1904-1905.

GRINS AND CHUCKLES

"Why do you call your dog 'Tonic?'" "Because he's a mixture of bark, steal and whine."

Stella—Mabel has started a friendship garden, and she says she wants a century plant to remind her of you. Bella—That so? She told me she wanted a rubber plant for you.

Fair Customer—"I tell you that I wear a number two." Clerk—"But, madam, this shoe that you just took off is a number four." Fair Customer—"Yes, I know; but it has stretched horribly."

"Life must be pretty dull up here, eh?" asked the visitor in Alaska. "Yes," replied the native, "about all there is to do is to fish and drink." "Is that so?" "Yep. And in the winter it's too cold to fish."

Hewitt—It is sad about Gruet losing his leg in that railroad accident. Jewett—Yes, it must be a great disappointment for him. He has always been talking about "getting there with both feet."

Sister—Why, Lester, you should not ask for such things in your prayers! You don't know whether they would be best for you or not. Lester—Say, will you stop interfering with me and the Lord?

Magistrate—Rastus, I see you are here again. I believe you have been tried and convicted seven times for stealing. Rastus—Yes, judge. It seems to be nuthin' but trials and temptations for me in this life.

Ding—That bank president has all the instincts of a trust magnate. Dong—In what way? Ding—He acts as if, instead of paying interest on deposits, he would like to charge depositors storage on their deposits.

"I always knew women were inconsistent, but I heard of one to-day that takes the cake." "What did she do?" "Chased her husband out of the house with a stove-lifter and then cried because he left her without kissing her goodbye."

A BEAUTIFUL FIEND.

By Col. Ralph Fenton.

In 1876 I graduated from the Oberlin, O., Medical Institute, and received a diploma, duly and lawfully entitling me to practice the science of materia medica in any part of the United States.

After drifting about aimlessly for a year or so, I at length hung out my shingle in Cleveland, O., and settled down to business.

I experienced the usual luck of all professional young men for about six months, in that time not receiving a single call for my services.

I was about giving up in despair, having concluded that I had mistaken my calling, when one morning I was waited upon by an elderly gentleman whose bearing and address denoted a person of culture and wealth.

"Well, sir," I remarked, as he seated himself, "what can I do for you?"

"I don't know whether you can do anything for me or not," he answered, brusquely. "That's just what perhaps I've called to see you about."

"State your case, please," I returned, "and then perhaps I can tell you what I will be able to do."

"My name is Wentworth," he began, in his characteristically abrupt manner. "I have a daughter Fanny, an only child. Six months ago she was engaged to be married to an estimable young man, a son of one of our leading bankers. I had given my consent to the union, and her future seemed bright with happiness. Suddenly he was taken sick and died. Since that time she has been a changed girl. Her health, which was formerly robust, has become very much impaired, and she seems to be gradually falling away. I have tried every means in my power to restore her to her former self, sent her abroad, employed the best medical skill in town, in fact done everything, but without success."

"Perhaps her condition is owing to her dejection over the death of her fiancé," I suggested.

"Not at all," he replied. "On the contrary, she expresses herself as glad that he is dead. Take it all in all," he continued, "it is a strange case. She seems to have become misanthropic; all the pleasures of society have become abhorrent and distasteful to her. These are her symptoms; now what do you make of the case?" he asked.

"It would be difficult to tell from your description what is the trouble," I answered. "It will be necessary for me to have a personal interview with the young lady before I can form an intelligent opinion on the matter."

"I will readily grant you that," he returned, "at any time you may appoint to call at my house."

"I must ask your assistance in the matter, Mr. Wentworth," I replied. "I have certain theories regarding your daughter's case, which I shall need your aid to develop."

"Command me," he answered, enthusiastically. "I am willing to do anything to bring about my daughter's recovery."

"Then I must ask you to introduce me to your daughter in an unprofessional capacity, having previously intimated

to her that I am a business friend of yours, whom you would be pleased to have her regard as a suitor for her hand. This is a strange request, Mr. Wentworth," I continued, "but I have good grounds for making it, and I trust you will consent."

After pressing me to explain my reasons for this plan of action, he at length reluctantly consented, and it was arranged that I should accompany him home to dinner the following evening.

On his way from business the following afternoon he called for me as agreed. His residence was one of the most elegant on Marston Avenue, and everything inside and around it denoted wealth and good taste.

On being ushered into the parlor we found Miss Fanny Wentworth present, and on being introduced to her, she received me in a formal, if not to say cold, manner.

During the few moments before dinner that I was left alone with her, I endeavored to enter into conversation with her, but found it a hopeless task.

She sat in her chair as impassive and indifferent apparently to all my efforts at sociability as an iceberg.

All her replies were in monosyllables, as if any attempt to converse was painful to her.

I was just beginning to feel ill at ease, when Mr. Wentworth appeared and announced that dinner was ready, and asking me to join him led the way to the dining-room. I followed, and Miss Fanny remained seated in the parlor.

"Well, doctor," said Mr. Wentworth, when we were seated at the table, "what do you think of her—have you formed an opinion?"

"Yes," I answered, "I have. I am sorry to tell you, Mr. Wentworth, but I think your daughter is afflicted with a complaint that is beyond all medical skill to cure."

"And what may that be?" he inquired, anxiously.

"She is suffering from some deep mind trouble," I replied. "Some great sorrow has fallen upon her, or, pardon me, she has committed some grievous sin that haunts her continually."

"I will admit that a great sorrow fell upon her in the death of Edgar Wilmot, her betrothed; but that she is brooding over some grievous sin she has committed is a proposition I will never entertain for a moment, doctor. No, sir, Fanny is too noble a girl to wreck her happiness by committing grievous sins," he answered, indignantly.

After this conversation lapsed into other channels, and just as we had finished our meal, the bell rang, and the servant announced two gentlemen in the parlor who wished to see Mr. Wentworth.

The latter went, accompanied by me, to the parlor, and as Mr. Wentworth's friends desired to talk with him on private business, he took them into his private room and left me alone with Miss Fanny.

I exerted all my conversational powers to entertain her, and was rewarded after a while in her becoming more social and genial.

We discussed the topics of the day, and I found her to be an exceedingly intelligent and accomplished young woman.

During a lull, she suggested that she would be pleased to have me try some of her father's wine, assuring me that it was imported from the finest vintages of France.

I signified my willingness to indulge, and she arose, and

going to a little closet in the room, brought out two trays on which were a number of bottles filled with wines of different varieties.

She placed them on the table, and after pouring out about half a glassful of claret, put it down on the table, and took a seat in a chair opposite the sofa on which I was reclining, never offering me the glass.

While I was thinking of this strange action, her father, accompanied by his two friends, entered the room.

"Ah, Jackson!" he exclaimed, coming over to the table, "I see you have been testing my wine. What do you think of it, old fellow? It's prime, isn't it?"

"Really, Mr. Wentworth," I replied, "not having tasted of the wine, I am unable to judge of its quality."

"Haven't tasted it, eh?" he asked. "I thought Fanny had been treating you."

"No, father," she replied languidly. "I poured out some wine for the gentleman, but did not give it to him."

"Well—well, Fanny," he returned, good-naturedly, "that's a strange action of yours. But here, Jackson," he continued, picking up the glass, "I'll be more generous with you. Drink that up, and tell me what you think of it," he continued, as he handed me the glass.

As I took it in my hand and held it aloft to admire its rich, ruddy hue, I could see a fine, white sediment in the bottom, which my experienced medical eyes told me at once was no less than the deadly drug, arsenic.

"Drink up, my boy," said Mr. Wentworth.

"Excuse me; not to-night," I replied, handing him back the glass. "I have no desire to die to-night."

"No desire to die to-night!" he exclaimed. "Great heavens, sir, what do you mean?" he continued, his face flushing with indignation.

"I mean, sir," I returned, calmly, "that there is poison enough in that glass to kill a dozen men, and I believe your daughter has placed it there with vile intent."

"Poison in that wine!" Mr. Wentworth exclaimed, his frame trembling with emotion; "and my daughter placed it there with vile intent! Heavens, Fanny, can this be true? Speak! Tell me, have you been guilty of so vile a crime?"

During this speech she maintained her position on the chair, every muscle of her beautiful face as rigid as if in death.

In response to her father's repeated solicitations for her to tell him the truth, she arose to her feet and, striking an attitude that would have made a tragedienne envious, exclaimed:

"Yes, father, it is true that I have placed poison in that wine, and I regret that it failed to accomplish its work. I have sworn to have revenge for my wrong, and I will have it if I have to poison all the men on earth. Edgar Wilmot betrayed me, under promise of marriage, and then cast me off. I poisoned him, and thus had my revenge. After his death I swore to have revenge against all of his sex who should dare to approach me as suitors for my hand. I have already sent two to their last account, and when you told me you wished me to regard this gentleman as a suitor, I determined to have him join them."

As she finished this ghastly confession she sank down in a chair, overcome with her agitation.

During her remarks both of Mr. Wentworth's friends had stood near the parlor door, quiet but horrified listeners.

As she sank into her chair, one of them came forward, placed his hand on Mr. Wentworth's shoulder, and said:

"Mr. Wentworth, I always thought there was something mysterious about my brother Edgar's death, and now that the secret's out, I owe it to my family and society to have this young woman punished for her crime. To-morrow I shall take steps to have her placed where she can do no further harm."

Bursting into tears, the indignant father replied:

"Oh, this trouble is greater than I can bear. Act according to what you believe to be your duty, Mr. Wilmot, and I shall be satisfied. I do not believe my daughter is a criminal. Be charitable enough to believe with me that she is insane," he went on, sobbing bitterly.

After a few minutes' consolatory chat with Mr. Wentworth, I took my leave with the two gentlemen.

True to his word, Mr. Wilmot applied to the proper authorities on the following day, and a warrant was issued for Miss Wentworth's arrest on a charge of murder. Her arrest on so heinous a charge created the most intense excitement in society.

A private consultation was held on her case by a number of eminent physicians before her trial came up in court, and the evidences of her insanity were so unmistakable that a trial was omitted, and she was quietly taken away to the State lunatic asylum.

Every lunatic has some hobby which they are constantly brooding over, and talking about with all who will listen to them. Fanny Wentworth's hobby was revenge, and her weapon to this end was poison. She would sit in her little cell all day laughing childishly to herself over her awful deeds.

So completely did she seem wrapped up in her awful scheme of murderous revenge that the keeper of the asylum came to regard her with horror, and to every one who visited the place she was pointed out as The Beautiful Fiend.

John Hicks, aged seventy-eight, basketmaker and well known local character, who lived in a shack on the Northern Pacific right of way, died in Tacoma, Wash., after having lived for years on 10 cents a day. His diet was soup, bread and coffee. Sixty years ago Hicks is said to have owned sixteen acres of land in what is now almost the heart of Chicago. He first came into local prominence in 1911, when he appealed to the county commissioners to increase his charity allowance from \$2 to \$4 a month, and then outlined his simple method of living. "In the morning I eat bread and coffee. I don't bother to eat anything at noon. It's quite a nuisance eating by one's self anyway," explained Hicks. "Then for my meal in the evening I have soup. I buy a pound of coffee and make it last me a month by boiling it as long as it will color the water." Friends who know the old man well say he persisted to the last in living on his allowance of 10 cents a day.

GOOD READING

A report from Rome states that owing to all steel material for ships under construction for the Italian navy being tied up in France and Germany, the United States is looked to for the needed material, and American steel plants have been approached with a view of securing the large tonnage required.

Trials of Argentine petroleum in one of the locomotives of the Port of Buenos Aires in the last two months have so well satisfied the authorities that it has been decided to use it in all the locomotives of the port. The test was made with Comodoro Rivadavia petroleum in a 250 h.p. locomotive where it showed economy over coal of 20 to 30 per cent.

A non-skid automobile tire of unusual design is being introduced by the Sirdar Rubber Company of London, England. The tire has a zig-zag line deeply cut into the tread, in which metallic studs are set so that their tops are flush with the tread. The tire is said to be very resilient, and yet as much a "non-skid" as if it were fitted with separate steel-studded cover.

While she was on her way to visit a sick neighbor, Mrs. Henry Neal, of Lone Rock, Ark., was attacked by three large black snakes which dropped on her from an overhanging bough as she passed under. James T. Adams, a traveling man, was attracted to the woman by her screams. When he arrived she had fainted and one of the reptiles was coiled about her throat, while the other two had her arms and legs pinioned. Adams cut the snakes in pieces with his pocketknife, revived Mrs. Neal, and carried her to the nearest house.

Although but little has been heard of the Zeppelins since the war began, no one seems to know whether their general absence from the field of activity indicates some unforeseen unfitness, or is an indication that they are being withheld with some particular purpose in the future. However that may be, it is a fact that these huge dreadnoughts of the air have not as yet lived up to their reputations. It is most probable, however, that the little aeroplane has so far met all of the requirements, and that the larger craft are being saved for other maneuvers.

George M. Hoover, former mayor and wealthy banker, Dodge City, Kan., who died recently, left more than \$100,000 to Dodge City, it was discovered when his will was opened. Hoover's wife died last spring. He had no children or near relatives. About \$50,000 was left to relatives in Canada and to friends here, and \$10,000 to build an auditorium for Dodge City, which has no theater or public meeting house. In addition, \$1,000 was left each of the six churches here. The rest of the estate is to be invested, and the income each year expended in beautifying the city.

George Kreiger, of Grand Rapids, Mich., has completed a machine which will considerably lighten the work of the farmer. Digging potatoes was once one of the farmer's back-breaking tasks. That was in the old days when a fork was used. Now this is all changed. The Grand Rapids man's machine is drawn by a horse, digs the potatoes, cleans them and hoists them into the wagon. Another contrivance will sack the potatoes. The machine is operated by one man. All he has to do is to drive the horse.

One of the most important public works now being carried on by the Taiwan government is the improvement of the harbor at its principal port, Keelung, Formosa, at the extreme northern end of the island, through which passes more than half of the shipping. The new work includes large warehouses of steel and of reinforced concrete; a sea wall, for protection against the destructive typhoons, is to be lengthened some 14,000 feet; twenty-one mooring buoys are to be placed, and eight cranes of 1½ and 10 tons are to be added to the equipment. Improvements of the same general nature are also being carried on at Takao, Tansing and Tansui.

After traveling hundreds of miles to buy a Russian wolfhound, which he believed would rid his ranch of coyotes, C. R. Adams, of Toston, Mont., reported to the police that the dog, for which he paid \$500, was stolen while he was buying a collar for the animal at Second and Market streets, Philadelphia. A few hours later Detective Curran found the dog in a pet shop on Ninth street, above Market, and turned it over to the owner. Mr. Adams told the police that coyotes are causing all kinds of trouble to ranch owners in Montana, and that a bounty is paid to persons who kill the annoying animals. He read of a man living in Paulsboro, N. J., having a Russian wolfhound, and, knowing that this animal is feared by the coyotes, he decided to come East and purchase the dog. He left with the dog for his home.

It is well known that paper is singularly impermeable to cold. During the hard winter campaign of 1870 the officers of the Army of the Loire frequently wrapped themselves in newspapers when bivouacking in the open, and reported that, failing warm wool blankets, no better protection could be found. During the Russo-Japanese war, the Mikado's soldiers were provided with paper shirts. M. Laveran, of the French Academy of Sciences, has now come forward with the suggestion that the ministry of war lay in a stock of paper blankets. No precaution, he points out, should be overlooked, and the unusually chilly weather this fall would seem to indicate a cold winter. He adds that individual soldiers can make their own blankets by the simple process of stitching together several thicknesses of newspaper. A light coating of vaseline makes the paper watertight and more pliable.

ARTICLES OF ALL KINDS

A MOUNTAIN OF ROCK SALT.

A mountain of rock salt, 300 feet in height and nearly a mile in diameter, is described by Prof. E. F. Gautier as occurring near Jelfa, Algeria. Two other hills of this character are known in Algeria, both being near Biskra, and in all cases the salt is surrounded by Triassic marls and clays. A curious feature of the Jelfa Hill is the fact that in spite of the very soluble character of the material composing it, it stands up in high relief from the surrounding clay, and contains no valleys or other signs of erosion. It does, however, contain a number of sink-holes, as in a limestone country. When the brief torrential rains of winter occur, the water sinks almost at once into these cavities and soaks through the permeable salt, emerging at the margin of the hill in salt springs. The same showers falling on impermeable clays and marls produce a maximum of mechanical erosion, so that these substances are worn away, leaving the salt in high relief.

\$5,000,000 SENT BY MAIL.

Five million dollars in gold came by parcel post to the United States Sub-Treasury in Boston recently from the mint in Philadelphia. This was the first shipment of money by the government by way of the parcel post system. The bags of gold were received in the South Station by Supt. Johnston of the United States Railway Mail Service, and a crew of four clerks. It took them several hours to unload the gold on to a regulation postal screen wagon, which carted it across the city to the Boston Federal Building.

It has been the custom of the government to ship its money by express, but this experiment of sending it by parcel post has proved successful, and it is not improbable that the Treasury Department will use the mails from now on for this purpose.

CREEK COUNCIL OF INDIANS.

The following resolution was unanimously adopted by the Creek Council of Indians, consisting of more than one hundred members, at their recent session held at Okmulgee, Oklahoma:

Realizing that we have in the person of our present Honorable Commissioner of Indian Affairs, one of America's foremost statesmen, a man of unusual ability and of untiring energy, who has consecrated his heart and dedicated his soul to the best interests of the Indians of America, and realizing that within the short period of time that he has served as Commissioner of Indian Affairs he has done more to bring about a spirit of friendly co-operation and better feeling and more thorough understanding between the Indians and remaining citizenship of Oklahoma than has ever before existed, and realizing that through his personal efforts he has done so much to inspire the Indians of Oklahoma to attain a higher standard of moral and social conditions, safeguarding at all

times, as he has, our property rights, and especially the property rights and moral and social welfare of our minor children;

Now, therefore, be it resolved, That as a token of our appreciation of the services he is rendering us and the people of our tribe, we express to him the gratitude of our people and the support of the people of our tribe in the very splendid effort he is making to conserve our estates, the estates of our children and lift to a higher degree of citizenship the personnel of our tribe.

STRASSBURG'S NOTED CLOCK.

Strassburg, situated on the Ill River, is divided into three sections, of which the central island is not only the largest, but the most important. The city is two miles from the Rhine, with which it is connected by the Rhone-Marne Canal, which joins the river Ill above the town and connects the Rhine-Rhone Canal outside the eastern fortifications.

The cathedral to-day is as quaint and beautiful as ever. In the south transept still stands the famous astronomical clock, but it must be confessed that it is not the ancient horologue made by the hands of Daspodeus in 1571 to replace the still more ancient timepiece which is mentioned in history as having existed as early as the thirteenth century.

The present quite as remarkable astronomische uhr is the work of Schwelgue, a French clockmaker, who, in 1838, finished this masterpiece to replace the clock of Daspodeus, which is known to have earned a rest, having run for some 218 years. If the truth be told, Schwelgue was only able to utilize a few parts of the interior of the ancient clock and some portions of the gilded decorations; but nevertheless the cathedral's immense uhr is deservedly famous. Each day in the year a constant growth of sight-seers is grouped in front of it and, at the noon hour especially, it is the most popular attraction in the Munster.

On the first gallery an angel strikes the hour on a bell in his hand, while a figure of Time reverses his sandglass. Higher up are a group of figures representing the quarters by "Boyhood," "Youth," "Manhood" and "Old Age," while "Death" himself tolls the hours. There is also a symbolic figure to represent each day in the week. Sunday Apollo steps out from his little niche, Monday, Diana, and so on through the week.

But at noon the programme is even more interesting, for at that time the twelve apostles file out and pass around the seated figure of the Saviour, and a wooden cock perched upon the top of the tall tower, within which is concealed the weights, stretches his neck, flaps his wings and gives vent to a shrill crow, which fills the entire cathedral and seems almost to make the splendid old stained glass windows rattle. The clock shows the movement of the planets and boasts a perpetual calendar and a most unique mechanism by which it regulates itself for an unknown number of years.

FIFTEEN



Also known as a Japanese butterfly. A pleasing novelty enclosed in an envelope. When the envelope is opened Fifteen will fly out through the air for several yards. Made of colored paper to represent a butterfly six inches wide.

Price, 10c. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

X-RAY WONDER



This is a wonderful little optical illusion. In use, you apparently see the bones in your hand, the hole in a pipe-stem, the lead in a pencil, etc. The principle on which it is operated cannot be disclosed here, but it will afford no end of fun for any person who has one. Price, 15 cents each, by mail, postpaid.

FRANK SMITH, 383 Lenox Ave., N. Y.

GOOD LUCK BANKS.



Ornamental as well as useful. Made of highly ricketed brass. It holds just One Dollar. When filled it opens itself. Remains locked until refilled. Can be used as a watchcharm. Money refunded if not satisfied. Price, 10c. by mail.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

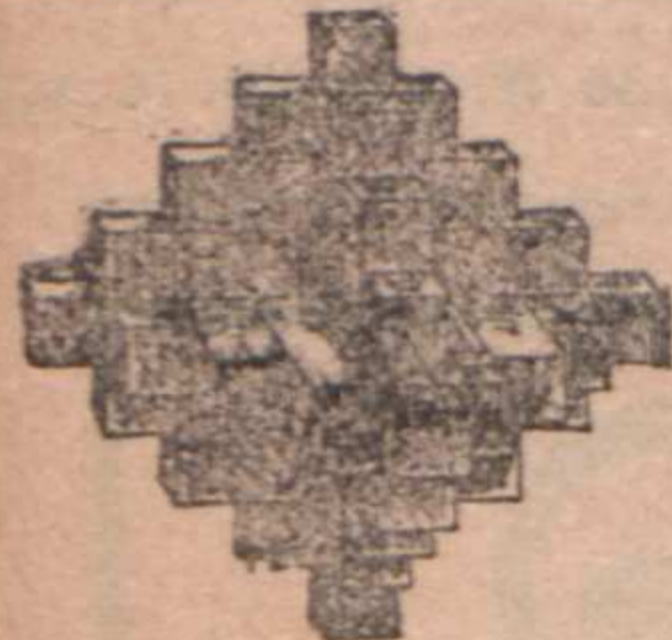
COMICAL FUNNY FACES.



This genuine laugh producer is made of nicely colored cardboard. A sharp, bent hook is at the back to attach it to the lapel of your coat. Hide one hand under the lapel and twitch the small, black thread. It will cause a red tongue to dart in and out of the mouth in the most comical manner imaginable at the word of command. It is very mystifying, and never fails to produce a hearty laugh. Price, 6c. each by mail.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

GIANT SAW PUZZLE.



This puzzle contains twenty-one pieces of wood nicely finished; take them apart and put them together same as illustrated. Everybody would like to try it, as it is very fascinating. Price, by mail, postpaid, 25c. each.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE INK BLOT JOKER.



Fool Your Friends. The greatest novelty of the age! Have a joke which makes everybody laugh. More fun than any other novelty that

has been shown in years. Place it on a desk, tablecloth, or any piece of furniture, as shown in the above cut, near some valuable papers, or on fine wearing apparel. Watch the result! Oh, Gee! Price, 15c. each, postpaid.

A. A. WARFORD, 16 Hart St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

SLIDE THE PENCIL.



The pencil that keeps them guessing. Made of wood and lead just like an ordinary pencil, but when your victim starts to write with it—presto! the lead disappears. It is so constructed that the slightest pressure on the paper makes the lead slide into the wood. Very funny and a practical joke.

Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid; 3 for 25c. H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

LIGHTNING TRICK BOX.



A startling and pleasing illusion! "The ways of the world are devious," says Matthew Arnold, but the ways of the Lightning Trick Box when properly handled are admitted to be puzzling and uncertain. You take off the lid and show your friends that it is full of nice candy. Replace the lid, when you can solemnly assure your friends that you can instantly empty the box in their presence without opening it; and taking off the lid again, sure enough the candy has disappeared. Or you can change the candy into a piece of money by following the directions sent with each box. This is the neatest and best cheap trick ever invented.

Price, only 10c.; 3 for 25c., mailed, postpaid. C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

DELUSION TRICK.



A magic little box in three parts that is very mystifying to those not in the trick. A coin placed on a piece of paper disappears by dropping a nickel ring around it from the magic box. Made of hard wood two inches in diameter. Price, 12c.

FRANK SMITH, 383 Lenox Ave., N. Y.

THE MAGIC NAIL.



A common nail is given for examination, and then instantly shown pierced through the finger; and yet, when taken out, the finger is found to be perfectly uninjured, and the nail is again given to be examined. Nicely finished.

Price, 10c. by mail, postpaid. H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

THE ELK HEAD PUZZLE.



Just out, and one of the most fascinating puzzles on the market. The stunt is to separate the antlers and rejoin them. It looks easy, but try it and you will admit that it is without exception the best puzzle you have ever seen. You can't leave it alone. Made of silvered metal.

Price, 12c.; 3 for 30c., sent by mail, postpaid. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE FINGER THROUGH THE HAT.



Having borrowed a hat from your friend, push your finger through the crown of it, and it is seen to move about. Though very amusing to others, the owner of the hat does not see the joke, but thinks it meanness to destroy his hat; yet when it is returned it is perfectly uninjured. Price, 10c. each by mail.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

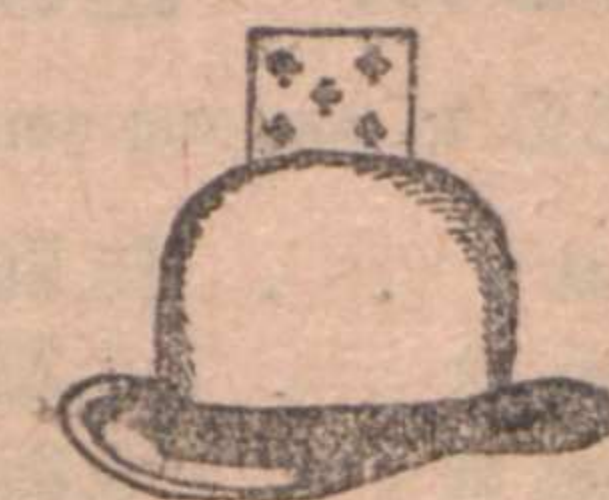
DEAD SHOT SQUIRT PISTOL.



If you shoot a man with this "gun" he will be too mad to accept the ancient excuse—"I didn't know it was loaded." It loads easily with a full charge of water, and taking aim, press the rubber bulb at the butt of the Pistol, when a small stream of water is squirted into his face. The best thing to do then is to pocket your gun and run. There are "loads of fun" in this wicked little joker, which looks like a real revolver, trigger, cock, chambers, barrel and all. Price only 7c.; 4 for 25c.; one dozen 60c. by mail postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

CARD THROUGH THE HAT TRICK



With this trick you borrow a hat, and apparently shove a card up through the crown, without injuring the card or hat. The operation can be reversed, the performer seemingly pushing the card down through the crown into the hat again. It is a trick which will puzzle and interest the closest observer and detection is almost impossible. It is so simple that a child can learn how to perform it in a few minutes.

Price 10 cents each, by mail, post-paid. H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

THE JOKER'S CIGAR.



The biggest sell of the season. A real cigar made of tobacco, but secreted in the center of cigar about one-half inch from end is a fountain of sparklets. The moment the fire reaches this fountain hundreds of sparks of fire burst forth in every direction, to the astonishment of the smoker. The fire is stage fire, and will not burn the skin or clothing. After the fireworks the victim can continue smoking the cigar to the end. Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c.; 1 dozen, 90c., mailed, post-paid.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

HOT AIR CARDS



There are 8 cards in a pack. They are nicely printed on good bristol-board, and contain the funniest literature ever composed, such as "Professor Huggem, huggem and kissing done in the very latest style," a Liar's License, a membership card for the Down and Out Club, and other comical poetry and prose. Every card guaranteed to make the girls giggle, the boys to laugh, and the old folks to roar. If you are looking for fun, get a pack.

Price 10 cents a pack, by mail, post-paid. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

LOTS OF FUN



Ventriloquist Double Throat. Fits roof of mouth; always invisible; greatest thing yet. Astonish and mystify your friends. Neigh like a horse; whine like a puppy; sing like a canary, and imitate birds and beasts of the field and forest. **Loads of Fun.** Wonderful invention. Thousands sold. Send a dime and a 2c stamp for one dozen.

DOUBLE THROAT CO., Dept. K, Frenchtown, N. J.

NOVELTIES—Tricks, jokes, puzzles, magic, Illustrated catalogue free. **EXCELSIOR NOVELTY CO., Dept. C, Anderson Realty Bldg., Mount Vernon, N. Y.**



EASY MONEY Flash our "Millionaire's Bank Roll" and make 'em all "rubber." These goods are made in Washington and are dandies. Easy money hand selling them. Send 10c for sample "wad" and Big Catalog. Address, MCKINLEY CO., Dept. T, WINONA, MINN.

425 SONGS New and Old

Piano Music, Ballads, Big Fun Pack, age full of Tricks, Puzzles, Jolly Jokes, Riddles, Money-making Secrets, Love Letters, How to Flirt, How to Charm Others, To Tell Fortunes, Great Dream Mysteries, Hypnotism, Ventriloquism, Dancing Instructions—latest steps and hundreds of curious things that will entertain and amuse the whole family all winter. This big illustrated entertainment will be sent postpaid for 10c. 8 for 25c. **Rockwell Music Co., Dept. AG, 326 Madison St., Chicago**



A sample of my remedy has cured cases of Falling Sickness or Epilepsy. Prompt relief guaranteed. **I PAY EXPRESSAGE** on FREE TRIAL BOTTLE, if you cut out and RETURN advertisement. Sworn statements and hundreds of testimonials

on file. Give AGE and FULL PARTICULARS.

Dr. F. HARVEY ROOF

Dept. 1280, Station N, New York

MYSTERIOUS PLATE LIFTER.



Made of fine rubber, with bulb on one end and inflator at other. Place it under a table cover, under plate or glass, and bulb is pressed underneath, object rises mysteriously; 40 ins.

long. Price, 25c., postpaid. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

WIZARD'S PACK OF TRICK CARDS.



A full pack of 53 cards, but by the aid of the instructions given, anyone can perform the most wonderful tricks. Many of the feats exhibited are truly marvelous, and astonish and amuse a whole audience. Positively no sleight-of-hand. The whole trick is in the cards. Price, 35c. by mail, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

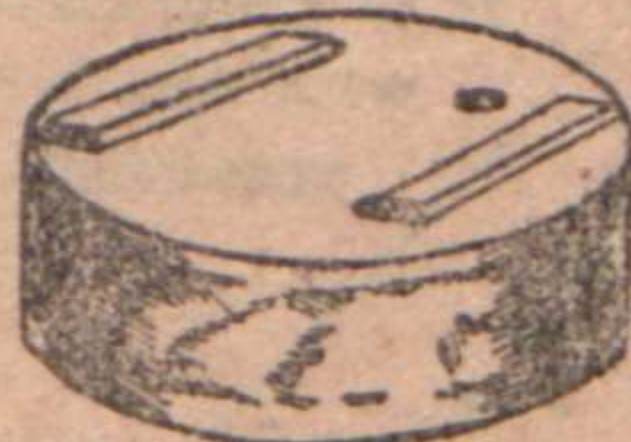
EGGS OF PHARAOH'S SERPENTS.



A wonderful and startling novelty! "Pharaoh's Serpents" are produced from a small egg, no larger than a pea. Place one of them on a plate, touch fire to it with a common match, and instantly a large serpent, a yard or more in length, slowly uncoils itself from the burning egg. Each serpent assumes a different position. One will appear to be gilding over the ground, with head erect, as though spying danger; another will coil itself up, as if preparing for the fatal spring upon its victim, while another will stretch out lazily, apparently enjoying its usual noonday nap. Immediately after the egg stops burning, the serpent hardens, and may afterward be kept as an amusing curiosity. They are put up in wooden boxes, twelve eggs in a box. Price, 8c., 3 boxes for 20c.; 1 dozen boxes for 60c., sent by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

MUSICAL SEAT



The best joke out. You can have more fun than a circus, with one of these novelties. All you have to do is to place one on a chair seat (hidden under a cushion, if possible). Then tell your friend to sit down. An unearthly

shriek from the little round drum will send your victim up in the air, the most puzzled and astonished mortal on earth. Don't miss getting one of these genuine laugh producers. Perfectly harmless, and never misses doing its work.

Price 20 cents each, by mail, post-paid. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

TRICK PUZZLE PURSE.



The first attempt usually made to open it, is to press down the little knob in the center of the purse, when a small needle runs out and stabs them in the finger, but does not open it. You can open it before their eyes and still they will be unable to open it.

Price, 25c. each by mail, postpaid.
H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

THE JUMPING FROG.



This little novelty creates a world of laughter. Its chief attractiveness is that it takes a few seconds before leaping high in the air, so that when set, very innocently along side of an unsuspecting person, he is suddenly startled by the wonderful activity of this frog. Price, 15c. each by mail postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

MANY TOOL KEY RING.



The wonder of the age. The greatest small tool in the world. In this little instrument you have in combination seven useful tools embracing Key Ring, Pencil Sharpener, Nail Cutter and Cleaner, Watch Opener, Cigar Clipper, Letter Opener and Screw Driver. It is not a toy, but a useful article, made of cutlery steel, tempered and highly nicked. Therefore will carry an edge the same as any piece of cutlery. As a useful tool, nothing has ever been offered to the public to equal it. Price, 15c., mailed, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE AUTOPHONE.



A small musical instrument that produces very sweet musical notes by placing it between the lips with the tongue over the edge, and blowing gently into the instrument. The notes produced are not unlike those of the flute and flute. We send full printed instructions whereby anyone can play anything they can hum, whistle or sing, with very little practice. Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c., mailed, postpaid.

A. A. WARFORD, 16 Hart St., Brooklyn, N. Y.



ELECTRIC PUSH BUTTON.

The base is made of maple, and the center piece of black wood, the whole thing about 1 1/4 inches in diameter, with a metal hook on the back so that it may be slipped over edge of the vest pocket. Expose to view your New Electric Bell, when your friend will push the button expecting to hear it ring. As soon as he touches it, you will see some of the liveliest dancing you ever witnessed. The Electric Button is heavily charged and will give a smart shock when the button is pushed. Price 10c., by mail, postpaid.

A. A. WARFORD, 16 Hart St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

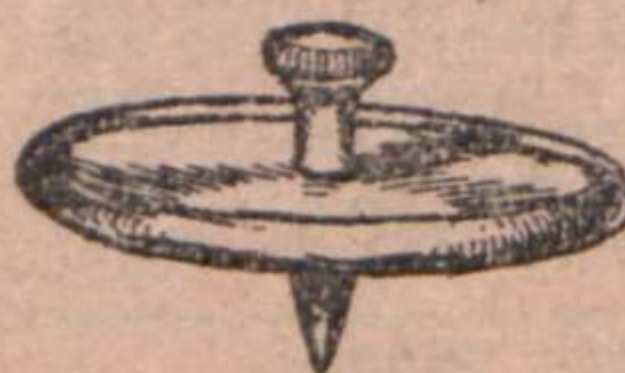
SURPRISE KINEMATOGRAPH.



The greatest hit of the season! It consists of a small metal, nicked tube, with a lens eye view, which shows a pretty ballet girl in tights. Hand it to a friend, who will be delighted with the first picture; tell him to turn the screw in center of instrument to change the views, when a stream of water squirts into his face, much to his disgust. Anyone who has not seen this kinematograph in operation is sure to be caught every time. The instrument can be refilled with water in an instant, ready for the next customer. Price 25c. by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

SPRING TOPS



Something new for the boys. A top you can spin without a string. This is a decided novelty. It is of large size, made of brass, and has a heavy balance rim. The shank contains a powerful spring and has an outer casing. The top of the shank has a milled edge for winding it up. When wound, you merely lift the outer casing, and the top spins at such a rapid speed that the balance rim keeps it going a long time. Without doubt the handsomest and best top in the market.

Price 12 cents each, by mail, post-paid
H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

MICROSCOPE.



By use of this wonderful little microscope you can magnify a drop of stagnant water until you see dozens of crawling insects; is also useful for inspecting grain, pork, linen, and numerous other articles. This little instrument does equally as good work as the best microscopes and is invaluable to the household. Is made of best finished brass; size when closed 1x2 1/2 inches. Price, 30c.

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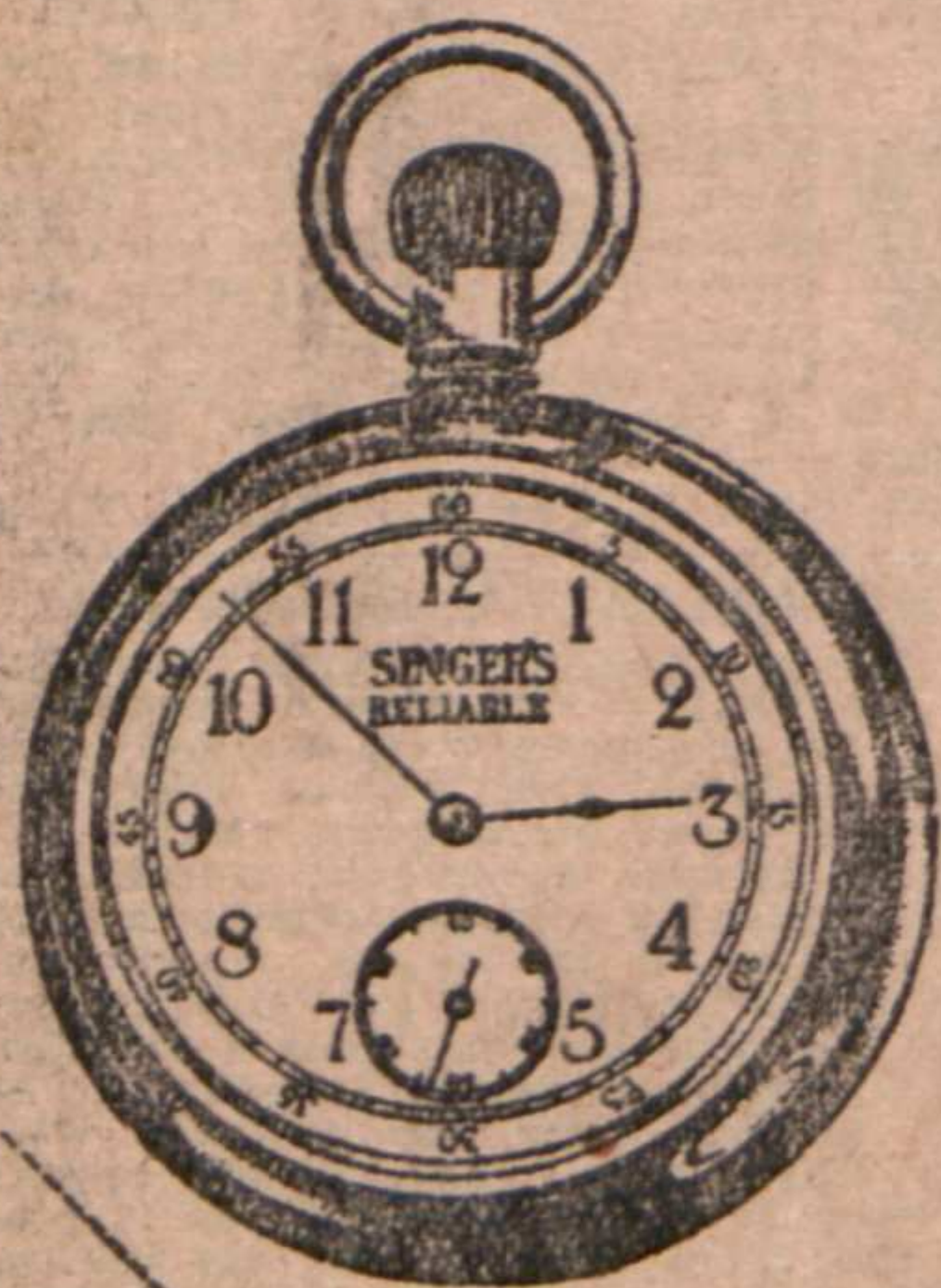
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